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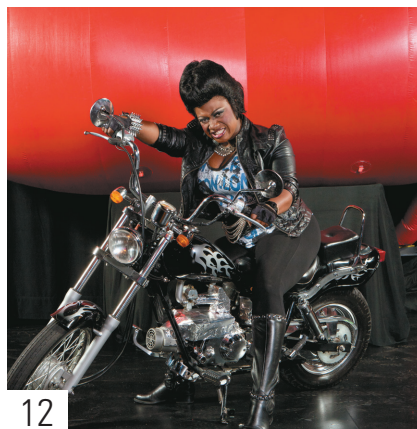
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Don Shelby, Andre Shoals, and Craig Daniel Stastny vamp it up in *The Rocky Horror Show* playing at THE LAB through Halloween.

Photo by Mike Hnida



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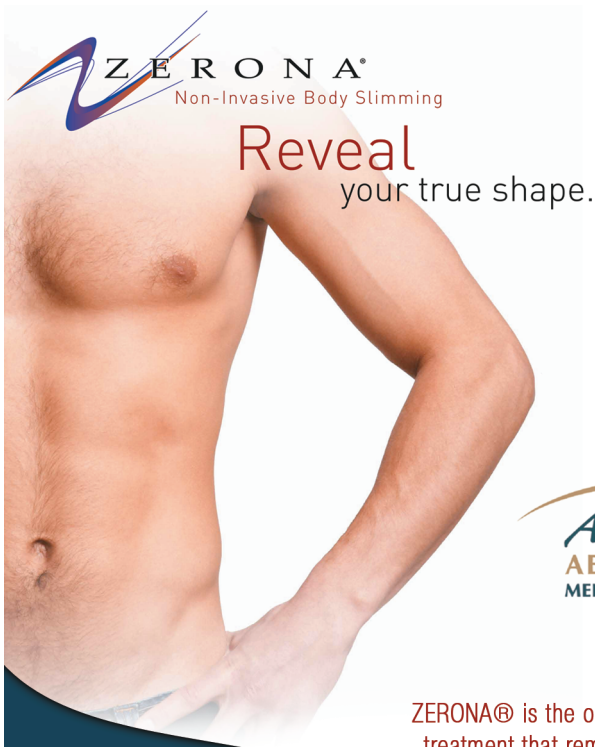
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THERE'S SOMETHING about growing up in Minnesota that makes the prospect of seeing Don Shelby in fishnet stockings and heels a little bit thrilling. We went to THE LAB theater to do a photo shoot with the actors of *The Rocky Horror Show* in preparation for this Fall Arts & Entertainment issue and I found myself surrounded by beautiful, talented people made up and dressed in all sorts of costume finery for their opening weekend. The props were ready, the smoke machine was prepped, the lights were up, and the camera was hot.

As was the shoot.

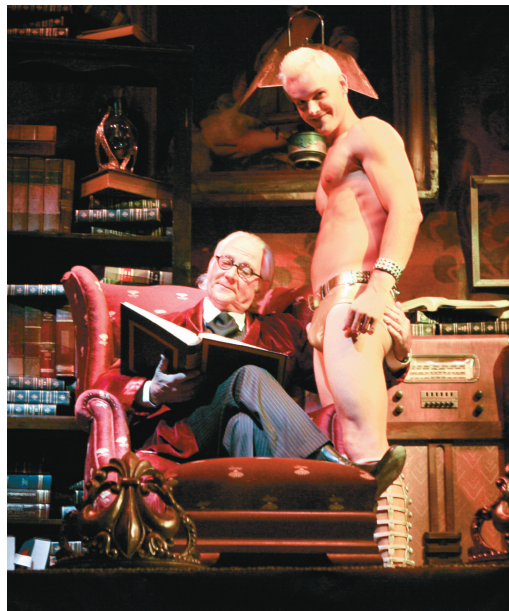
Each time we have a photo shoot, I want to push the limits. Any of the other magazines in town can get the standard photos of what to expect during the production. I like to put the *Lavender* spin on the artwork. What we can do is mix and match with a little more wanton abandon than the other publications. We can showcase the intersections of sexuality. We can get a little cheeky. And, we can ask more of the models.

I said to Don, "You know, I want to make sure that you're comfortable doing whatever it is you end up doing. I'd like to push a little, but not too far. I'll follow your lead." I'd been thinking that it'd be fun to put him in a silk dressing gown with feather accents...you know, make it a little saucy, but not over the top.

A wry look crossed his face. He was game.

Don found himself a boa and offered to don his platform heels. I declined the heels, thinking we could tease the readers to come and see the show rather than show too much in the magazine. We'd keep his coverage fairly tame.

Then, he pulled his "sassy" move.



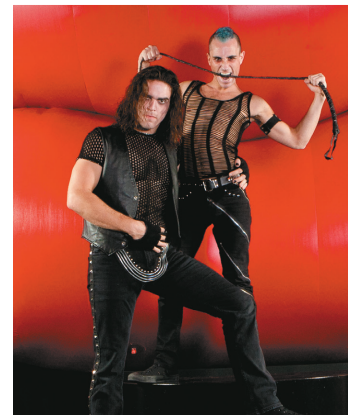
Photos by Mike Hnida

As it turns out, I didn't need to worry about Don Shelby. He improvised his own shots.

Enjoy this issue, readers. We are rife with arts and entertainment here in the Twin Cities and it's our pleasure to show it off for you in *Lavender's* pages.

With thanks,

Andy



End Notes:

Some of our regular contributors will not be seen for a couple of issues to make room for our coverage of the Lynx going to the WNBA playoffs. Stay tuned. Be sure to check out our website for additional arts and entertainment opportunities happening this fall: www.lavendermagazine.com. We don't have room for all of them in print, but they sure fit nicely on our website. And, look for our steamier photos from the cover shoot both online and in the next issue.

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One Man, One Woman—Right. Right?

RABBI ARELE Harel, a resident of the Jewish West Bank settlement of Shilo (roughly 40 miles north of Jerusalem), has devised an unconventional, and to some a controversial, solution for gay orthodox Jewish men who want to raise a family as their religion dictates: a matchmaking service to so they can meet Orthodox lesbians facing the same family problems. Despite criticism on several fronts, Harel's solution would give religious gay men a chance to have children while remaining observant. Homosexuality is viewed by traditional Jewish law, or Halacha, as a sin and a violation of that law.

While on one hand, some Orthodox Jewish rabbis feel that Harel should spend his energies trying to encourage gays and lesbians to change their sexual orientation, other liberal gay religious groups see Harel's efforts as an attempt to suppress homosexuality altogether. The rabbi himself says the primary object of his matchmaking is to help his clients have children, an important commandment in Jewish law.

While acknowledging difficulties—a potentially loveless marriage, assistance in achieving pregnancy, and possible affairs outside marriage, Harel, 36, was quoted as saying, "The main aspiration here is

parenthood. It allows them to become parents in a way that is permitted by religious Jewish law and prevents a conflict between their religious world and their sexual world."

Counter to current findings of the American Psychological Association, Harel even acknowledges that some gays can change their sexual orientation, but says that his service is for those who cannot, and who nevertheless want to remain observant and to have children. Harel has been bringing couples together for six years, having recognized a "deep distress" among people "facing a dead end road." He has wed 12 couples, and several have had children.

Recently, Kamoha, a religious gay group, began receiving inquiries from gay men and lesbian women about this approach and linked up with Harel last month to publicize the initiative on its Web site (www.kamoha.org.il)

How would this plan fit with our own religious far right's definition for family? If two mommies or two daddies don't constitute a family, how will they view Rabbi Harel's ingenious solution? What further requirements will they try to impose on their legally married, "one man, one woman" definition? Watch this spot. □

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The Twin Cities will receive \$1 million grant funding from American Express and The National Trust for Historic Preservation, through their Partners in Preservation program. The five previous locations are San Francisco, Chicagoland, New Orleans, Greater Boston and Seattle-Puget Sound. Twenty-five sites will be announced September 20, for which local residents can vote through October 12 on Facebook.com/PartnersinPreservation. The popular vote winner is guaranteed funding, while the remainder of the grant money will be given to other sites after review by American Express, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and an advisory committee. The committee, co-chaired by Minneapolis and St. Paul mayors R.T. Rybak and Chris Coleman, is composed of Twin Cities civic and preservation leaders. "The Twin Cities have a rich cultural and architectural history and we are thrilled to bring Partners in Preservation to the area this year," said Timothy J. McClimon, President of the American Express Foundation.



Of Dolls & Murder – And John Waters

Doll houses, dotted Swiss and death... Jerome Grant recipient and award- winning filmmaker Susan Marks's documentary *Of Dolls & Murder* explores tiny crime scenes and their connection to modern day forensics. These "Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Deaths," were created by Frances Glessner Lee (1878–1962), New England socialite and heiress, who dedicated her life to the advancement of forensic medicine. Her pieces are still used in forensic seminars. Once at Harvard, the dioramas are now ensconced at the Maryland Medical Examiner's Office, the very bailiwick of another Baltimore icon, filmmaker John Waters, the film's narrator. IFP Media Arts will present the regional premiere of the film on September 28 at The Heights Theater: 3951 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights. IFP Members, \$10; Non-Members, \$12, followed by a Q & A with the filmmakers, St. Paul Crime Lab criminalist Roberta DeCrans, and Sgt. Anita Muldoon of the St. Paul Police Department.



Healing Minnesota

Eloquent preacher Barbara Kay Lundblad, Union Theological Seminary professor and ELCA minister, will bring her inclusive perspective for Healing Minnesota with song, word, and spirit to Plymouth Congregational Church, September 25, to preach for the first-ever Healing Minnesota service. The Minnesota services incorporate song, speakers and spiritual reflection to inspire love, respect, and healing in a time of division about the proposed constitutional amendment on marriage rights. Cast members from Eat Street Players' *Sound of Music* will perform. Everyone is welcome to these services, 5 p.m., fourth Sunday of the month (except December), through October 2012, at Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet in Minneapolis, 612-871-7400.

Lundblad is the author of two books *Transforming the Stone: Preaching through Resistance to Change*, and *Marking Time: Preaching Biblical Stories in Present Tense*. Visit www.plymouth.org

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Rocky Horror Gets Spectacular Treatment at THE LAB

THE ROCKY Horror Show has continued to fascinate ever since its 1973 London stage premiere. Cardinal Theatricals, which gave us a powerful *Rent* last year at the LAB, has returned to that venue, with designer-director Andrew Rasmussen back in the saddle to revive Richard O'Brien's rock musical classic. Or, perhaps more accurately, to strap us into its harness.

Rasmussen has given the LAB a transformational Gothic interior makeover that spills over well beyond just the regular stage playing area. You walk down three flights of stairs to be seated. (There's also an elevator.) Rasmussen has taken to heart a line in the musical that he says "sums up my philosophy: 'Don't dream it. Be it.' The show is about all kinds of crazy people and someone who has a complete vision for something and he does it."

To point, transsexual mad scientist, Dr. Frank N. Furter ensnares a young straight couple in his castle where they discover he has created an actual man. This can be seen as Nietzschean/Ayn Randian license to cruelly exploit the unassuming or as a whack on the hindquarters of institutionalized erotophobia.

Moreover, in 2011, some will see inherent commentary on the concentration of wealth and secretive power. As Andre Shoals, who plays Furter points out, "He is so wrapped up in his own world that he's a recluse. Look at celebrities today who just lose themselves in their own world, in a complete bubble. They insulate, disconnect themselves." Not to mention various billionaires.

Don Shelby, of WCCO fame, plays The Narrator. He shares, "I first came into contact with the show in 1975. I thought it was such an in-your-face sort of show for the time. It was shocking for a lot of people, but it was also hilarious. The players made the shocking material easy to handle and then it became iconic after 10,15, 20 years. You know it's iconic when actors like Tim Curry in the *Picture Show* (film version) refuse to even now talk about that role because he just doesn't want to remind people. He would be forever Dr. Felix Frank N. Furter to everybody. It just became iconic because it

represented a rebelliousness. It represented an acceptance of alternative lifestyles. It represented everything that was smoldering in that time—almost like the first person to speak a language that is understood by everyone."

Rocky Horror also speaks the universal language of over-the-top melodrama. To that point, Shoals has tapped into O'Brien's affinity with vintage films. He says, "Because Frank N. Furter can be so high-camp he's right up my alley. When you look at all those old movies, they play so well to the camera in their emotions. Look at the close-ups. It's not like film today. There's the difference between how actors act today and how they did then. I've chosen to insert where he acts out Norma Desmond (*Sunset Boulevard*) and he's got his Jack Nicholson moment from *The Shining*."

Jamecia Bennett, named Lavender's '07 Best Musical Actress (*Penumbra's Get Ready*) plays two men: Dr. Scott, for whom Shelby is coaching her kooky German accent, and Eddie: "I'm in rock n' roll mode. I get to wear my leathers and be very dominant. So I'm excited about that!"

Craig Daniel Stastney plays Rocky, Frank N. Furter's hunky laboratory creation. He's been working out six days a week, taking in protein and creatine. He says that Rasmussen "wanted Rocky to be like a new born baby almost, but a grown man with the mind of a child. Trying to be a muscley guy with the mentality of a child is interesting."

Indeed, raw sexuality and innocence are at the heart of *Rocky Horror*. As co-designer Jeffrey Petersen puts it, "We're making it as fabulous as possible and sort of spooky and mysterious, but sexy."

The Rocky Horror Show

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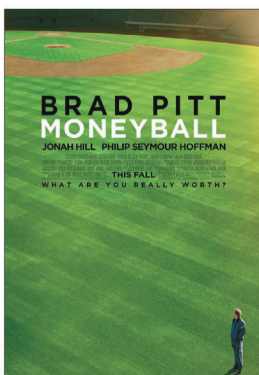


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Mean. Photo by Jacqueline Byers

➔ **Mean** — Youth Performance Company's winter staging of the musical that stares the issue of bullying right in the eye was such a runaway hit that it's already being remounted. From homophobic machismo to girls tormenting girls on Facebook to brazen Islamophobia, *Mean* is ripped right out of our time. Playwright Rita Cannon, only in her early 20s, shaped the script out of several interviews. It's not only a powerful social statement but it entertains enormously and can cause those who think bullying has gotten too much press lately to think again. She shares, "I figured as long as the play was informed by people's real experiences and spoke to them in specific ways, that would keep the material from feeling too didactic or perfunctory."

Cannon's script is enhanced by Kahlil Queen's vibrantly passionate music. He says, "Being gay myself, I remember how little support or direction there was for those who were being bullied, particularly around the issue of sexual orientation. I gave more aggressive syncopations to characters who would be identified as bullies or bystanders, and longer, more even rhythms to those characters who appear more passive, like they were trying to maintain a certain distance from their aggressors."

Director Jacie Knight reflects that bullying encounters "hurt our souls and spirits deeply. And most of us, to cope, bury those feelings. But this project has made all of us bring back those deep hurts. So it has been very emotionally draining. There is also a strong desire and commitment by all of the actors that we tell this story 'right' - make sure we are truthful and honest. The actors truly want to honor the victims."

Oct. 5-23 • Howard Conn Fine Arts Center, 1900 Nicollet Av., Mpls. • (612) 623-1020 • www.youthperformanceco.com

Cavalía — Normand Latourelle co-founded Cirque du Soleil. He is also creator/director of what he calls "a tribute to horses and a celebration of the relationship between humans and horses through history. Cavalía is a poetic multimedia, multidisciplinary show that integrates horses with acrobatics, fabulous projections, a little story-not a big one-in an amazing setting with live music."

All performers are responsible for their horses. The stables are staffed 24 hours with 20 employees including grooms, two veterinary technicians, and a farrier. Latourelle says, "We pay as much importance and attention to the horses' mental well-being as we do to their physical well-being. In a nutshell, we pay attention to what the horses tell us."


through Oct. 9 • Under the Big White Top, 1621 West End Blvd., • St. Louis Park • (877) 870-3643
www.cavalía.net



Cavalía. Photo by Jean François Leblanc

➔ **reasons to be pretty** — Neil LaBute's Broadway hit about blue collar America and the nation's adulation of physical beauty and cool receives its area premier by Walking Shadow at the Guthrie. Director Amy Rummenie: "It's so easy to project ourselves into the play's roles, to suddenly doubt that we're as smart, pretty, or kind as we think we might be. I mean, who is 100% confident in their looks? It's so easy for someone else to bring you down if you have even that smidgen of doubt, even in the most placid of relationships. In this case, these guys are a powder-keg just waiting for the smallest spark." **through Oct. 2 • Guthrie Theater, 818 So. 2nd St., Mpls. • (612) 377-2224 • www.guthrietheater.org**

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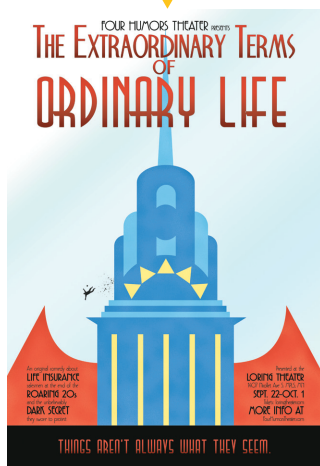
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Extraordinary Terms of Ordinary Life —

An insurance training manual from 1929, the year of the Stock Market Crash, is the springboard for a new play by Ryan Lear and Matt Spring written for the Four Humors troupe. Lear relates, “The manual contained a series of scripts for new salesmen that were written in a language that was bright and cheerful, portraying an attitude that things could only get better, completely oblivious to the catastrophe that loomed only months ahead.”

Through Oct. 1 • Loring Theater, 1407 Nicollet Av. S., Mpls. • (612) 353-6781
www.loringtheater.com



Poster designed by Ryan Lear

Cat's Paw — Playwright William Mastrosimone muses on eco-terrorism and media. Theatre Pro Rata director Carin Bratlie says he “asks us how far would you go for what you believe in? As soon as the audience sides with a character, the plot twists...and suddenly the choices aren't so clear. There is also an uncomfortably symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media and we as the public are also culpable because we feed the sensationalism with our desire to view it.” **through Sept. 25 • Gremlin Theatre, 2400 University Av. S., St. Paul • (612) 874-9321**
www.theatreprorata.org



Hamlet. Photo by Michal Daniel

Hamlet — Electronic surveillance and cell phones in this corporate re-setting of Shakespeare's tragedy of the Middle Ages aptly complements its scenes of espionage and privacy invasion. Director Bain Boehlke surgically mines the ruthlessness of King Claudius and Queen Gertrude's shocking power grab which sets off Prince Hamlet. Bradley Greenwald and Michelle Barber reveal them as utterly soulless. The “sweet prince” is masterfully rendered by Hugh Kennedy. We're made to wonder to what degree today's corporatism resembles medieval feudalism. **through Oct. 9 • Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Av. So., Mpls. • (612) 822-7063 • www.jungletheater.com**



Neighbors. Photo by Ann Marsden

➔ ***Neighbors*** — You'll cringe when you hear the names of some of the characters in Branden Jacob-Jenkins's irreverent comedy. “Mammy” is played in drag by seasoned Guthrie and Penumbra veteran Warren Bowles. Not to be outdone, Christian Gibbs plays “Sambo.” But before you get too offended, bear in mind that the playwright uses satire to expose the denial between and interracial couple and a family of “out there” black entertainers. **through Oct. 9 • Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 S. 4th St., Mpls. • (612) 338-6131**
www.mixedblood.com

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Danger: Arias Ahead

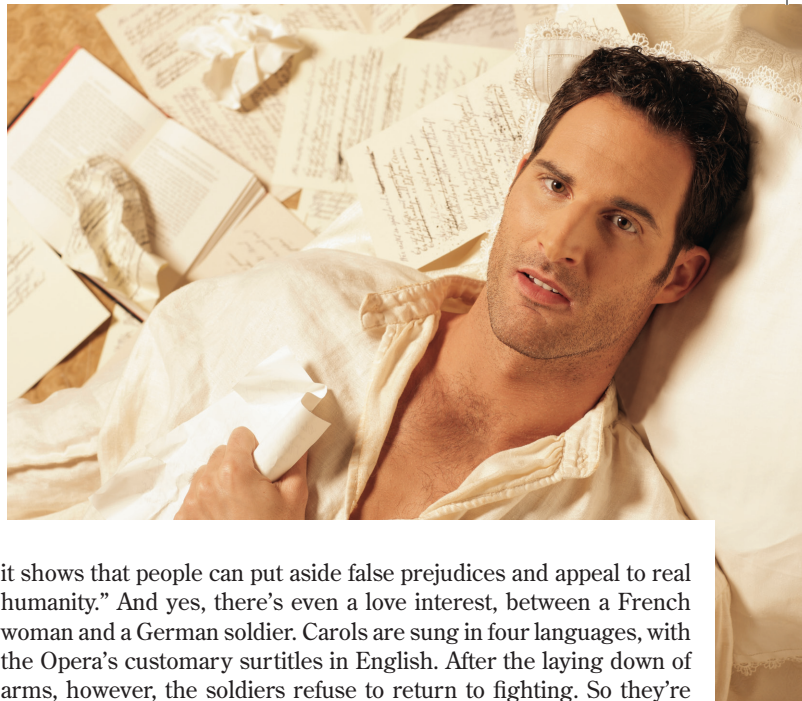
WITH ROMANCE-induced suicides featured in three of the five productions of Minnesota Opera's 2011-2012 season, we need a couple of crisis counselors backstage. But then, what's more romantic than a tenor or soprano who dramatically ends it all when love is thwarted?

The season opens September 20 with Mozart's comic come-uppance for two guys and two gals who adopt disguises to disclose the fickle nature of their intended in *Così fan tutte*. Why reprise the work this season? Because Artistic Director Dale Johnson has a guilty conscience, "The first time we did the opera, in 1992, it was"—long pause—"awful. So I've been longing to redo it—to redeem ourselves."

To assure that happens, he's hired Peter (Latté Da) Rothstein to direct, with a "great cast of very feminine ladies and very masculine men" in an "elegant" setting that runs counter to the current craze for grunge adaptations. "And it's selling very well," he reports. "Due to the ongoing economic crisis, we wondered, 'Will this be our bad year?' We've always operated in the black." No worries, Dale.

In November, to usher in the holiday season, the Opera will stage a premiere of *Silent Night*. But this is not your customary feel-good holiday fare: It's adapted from the French film *Joyeux Noël*, documenting the true story of the Christmas Eve armistice momentarily achieved between Allied and Axis soldiers in the trenches during World War I.

"When I first saw the film," Dale recalls, "I thought, 'Opera material!' It's sentimental but not maudlin. In the midst of a horrific war,



it shows that people can put aside false prejudices and appeal to real humanity." And yes, there's even a love interest, between a French woman and a German soldier. Carols are sung in four languages, with the Opera's customary surtitles in English. After the laying down of arms, however, the soldiers refuse to return to fighting. So they're shipped off in boxcars to far more dangerous battlefields—sort of mass suicide, if you will. "It's very moving," Dale attests.

January's production of *Werther* stars the Opera's sex-symbol of a tenor, the popular James Valenti, who yearned to perform the role. So, okay, they staged it for him. It's Massenet's story of a man who seeks his Ideal Love and cannot adapt to reality when Charlotte, the other half of the company's now-famous "love couple" (Roxana Constantinescu—last year's dazzling Cinderella), stands by her husband. So *Werther* shoots himself. Suicide No. 1 for the Minnesota Opera season. ■

Read more about the opera season at Lavendermagazine.com

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Neighbors. Photo by Ann Marsden



Pride. Photo by Travis Anderson

TWO TOPNOTCH THEATERS TRULY REACH OUT

THEATER HAS an image—sometimes legitimate, sometimes not—of being set apart from the general population. Silly stereotypes and false generalizations from both the political right and left convey theater as elitist, decadent, or just plain too hard to understand.

However, in the Twin Cities, the second major metro area for theater and dance after the Big Apple, such myths are shattered six or sometimes seven nights a week on local stages. Of course, in our economically dismal time, ticket prices are a barrier to many despite the fact that many theaters, as well as Goldstar.com, have discount options.

Two south Minneapolis theaters, Mixed Blood and Pillsbury House, now offer an unprecedented amount of free or “pay what you want” seating for the same high-quality productions they are famous for. It suits each theater’s view toward inclusion and connection to the financially strapped neighborhoods near their facilities, though folks everywhere are welcome to take advantage of this opportunity. (Both houses are currently staging shows with GLBT issues and crossgender performances: *The Pride* at Pillsbury House and *Neighbors* at Mixed Blood.)

PHT Communications Director Alan Berks says that two major grants from the State Arts Board and funding by the Legacy Amendment allowed the theater to lower their ticket price for their recent staging of *Broke-ology*, which featured the stellar James Craven and Sonja Parks, “to whatever an audience member could pay. Pick your price. Anytime. And we saw our attendance increase by 500 people from the previous show.” Some people paid nothing. A few even paid

\$50 dollars. One, even \$150. It was totally their individual choice.”

At *Mixed Blood* they have Radical Hospitality: no-cost access to all mainstage productions for all audience members. The aim is to build relationships with those who have been underserved by the arts and to eliminate real and perceived barriers to participation. Their model, launched by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, resembles New York’s Signature Theatre which found this approach vastly expanded patronage, subscriptions, and donations.

Mixed Blood Artistic Director Jack Reuler says, “by revolutionizing access, we are challenging the traditional notions of cost, quality, and value. Offering shows of the highest professional standards for no cost optimizes value.”

This also runs radically counter to a culture glued to TV screens, video games, spectator sports, and commercial film fare dominated by action and special effects. PHT Artistic Director Faye Price calls theater “a ritual of immediacy. It’s a live art form, living and breathing. You can never go to the theater and see a copy of last night’s performance. Something will be different. Real people in real time telling real stories. And as an audience member you communally bear witness to the story, absorbing individually, experiencing collectively. And in the best of all worlds those stories may provoke you, entertain you, introduce you to someone or something you’ve never, ever considered before. It can be magical. And community-building in the best sense of the term.”

www.mixedblood.com www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org

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The Warble

I AM not Sister Wendy. I have better teeth, my accent isn't as creepy, and I'm not a nun. I'm really not a nun. Oh, and I know practically nothing about fine art or art history. I've always had to rely on the kindness of my arts-while gal pals to fill in my gaping art history hole. So, when my editor told me to write something pertaining to the classics of the art world, I looked at her blankly. Um, really? I'm a drag queen. Who has a makeup artist. Because she can't paint her own face. Art is not my forte. So, I decided to leave it up to you guys. Yup, that's right, my gal pals! And the amazingly talented staff at *Lavender*. What Robb Grier does to my actual face, Mike Hnida here at *Lavender* does to my print face in the magazine. Over on the Facebooks, I asked you guys to tell me which famous work of art would you want to see me in and why. You responded with gusto. As did Mike. I can almost hear my blood-curdling warble jumping off the page.

Russell D *Whistler's Drag Mother* is brilliant! I'd like to see a tranny waitress version of Wanda behind the counter in Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks* instead of that dried up old fry cook.

Jd S IDK which but i think it would have to be a Salvador Dali painting cuz some times when I listen to the program it's like Alice fell down the rabbit hole and right into the scream...

Kyle B *Guernica* by Picasso because if my world was ending I'd want Wanda to be there with me!!!

Brian B Something by Keith Haring, but with big hair and jubbles!

J'nelle J *Portrait of Mademoiselle Dubois* by Alfred Stevens of Belgium.

Noah P *Piss Christ*.

Brian B *The Wanda With the Pearl Earring* or *The Night Watch*...with the little girl replaced with Wanda.

David F Rose on the fainting couch from *Titanic*.

Michelle T *American Gothic*.

Mike W *Whistler's Drag Mother*.

Becca S Mount Wanda (aka Mount Rushmore).

Roberta E *Mona Lisa*.

Jeff B *The Last Supper*.

Augustine C *The Scream* by Edvard Munch, because the expression is the *ne plus ultra* of camp.

Jack G Kathe Kollwitz' self portraits because she was so depressing and ugly and you're the opposite.

Brandon B *The Birth of Venus*. □



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FALL WINE & DINE

IT'S GOOD to be us, here, in this moment of time. Minnesota fall blows cool, with toasty scents of burning leaves and musty flannel. I invite you to celebrate and savor the fleeting day by raising a glass of wine—specifically, a glass from St. Croix Vineyards. Regional wines have gone from fruit and dandelions fermenting in Grandma's cellar to rich, complex, award-winning glasses made from hearty grapes developed by the University of Minnesota. The passionate, skilled winemakers at St. Croix Vineyards are creating intriguing, beautiful, and downright delicious pours. Invite some friends over and share the autumnal bounty with a locally inspired menu, paired with these wines.



Begin the evening with a cheese offering from Shepherd's Way. The sheep's milk is transformed into the soft Shepherd's Hope, firmer Friesago and the tangy Northern Lights Blue. All can be found at Mill City and Saint Paul Farmers Markets and many area grocery stores. Pair with a festive, easy wine cocktail. In a cocktail shaker, over ice combine ½ oz. ginger-flavored Domaine de Canton, 1 oz. Farigoule, a thyme-infused French liqueur, and top with the juicy, peachy-crisp Frontenac Gris. Shake vigorously and strain into a martini glass. Garnish with a swirl of Meyer Lemon zest.

Once your guests are good and primed, pull out all the stops with a main course of deceptively simple roast duck. Now, wild duck and domesticated duck are two different beasts. For this dinner, I suggest a domesticated bird, purchased from a nearby Lund's/Byerly's (or check Clancy's Meats for availability). A 5-6 lb bird will serve 4 people. Serve the crispy-skinned, juicy bird drizzled with a spiced sauce made from simmering a splash of the Marquette red wine with a jar of locally crafted Blueberry Pepper jam from Lucille's Kitchen Garden. (Substitute Concord grape jelly and ¼ tsp cardamom).

Accompany your bird with some simple roasted root vegetables, like parsnips tossed with a bit of salt, pepper, and Hope Creamery butter.

The ruby-colored wine has notes blackberries and black pepper and pairs beautifully with the rich meat and tart sauce, coaxing wild Northern woods harvested flavor.

Round out the meal with a simple salad of tossed greens and balsamic vinaigrette (mix 3 Tablespoons good quality, aged balsamic, 1 Tablespoon coarse ground mustard, scant ½ cup olive oil). Season the greens with salt and pepper before tossing with dressing.

For dessert, the Port (also made with the versatile Frontenac grape works) wonderfully with rich, creamy flavors. Tart cranberry slides into smooth cocoa flavors. Impress your guests with a stunning bread pudding flavored with Bittercube's Bolivar bitters, dark chocolate and blackberries. Or, do easy, "store-bought local" by serving a collection of adorable chocolate macarons from Sweets Bakeshop, with locations in St. Paul and Minneapolis, offering light, crunchy and utterly, moan-inducing desserts.

Settle in by candlelight and enjoy your guests with this luxurious, approachable wine and worry about the dishes tomorrow. Moments like these are meant to be savored.

Wine Cocktail de Canton

1/2 oz Domaine de Canton
1 oz Farigoule (thyme-infused liqueur)
4 oz Frontenac Gris

Pour over ice in a cocktail shaker. Shake vigorously and strain and serve in a martini glass with a Meyer lemon twist.

Roast Duck with Blueberry Pepper Wine Sauce

For Duck:

1 (5- to 6-lb) domestically raised duck
2 cups boiling-hot water
1 Tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon black pepper

Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 425°F.

Remove and discard excess fat from body cavity and neck, then rinse duck inside and out. Prick skin all over with a sharp fork. Fold neck skin under body, then put duck, breast side up, on a rack in a 13 x 9 x 3-inch roasting pan and pour boiling-hot water over duck (to tighten skin). Cool duck, then pour out any water from cavity into pan. Pat duck dry inside and out, reserving water in pan, then rub duck inside and out with kosher salt and pepper. Be careful to handle the raw poultry with care, sanitizing surfaces and washing hands as needed.

Roast duck, breast side up, 45 minutes, then remove from oven. Turn duck over using 2 wooden spoons, and roast 45 minutes more. Turn duck over again (breast side up), tilting duck to drain any liquid from cavity into pan. Continue to roast duck until skin is brown and crisp, about 45 minutes more (total roasting time: about 2 1/4 hours). Tilt duck to drain any more liquid from cavity into pan. Transfer duck to a cutting board and let stand 15 minutes before carving. Discard liquid in roasting pan.

For Sauce:

1 jar Lucille's Kitchen Blueberry Pepper Jam
1/4 cup Marquette or other peppery red wine (such as Cabernet Sauvignon)

Combine ingredients in small saucepan. Mix, simmer until slightly reduced or until coats the back of a spoon. Serve duck carved and drizzled with sauce.

Dark Chocolate Blackberry Bread Pudding

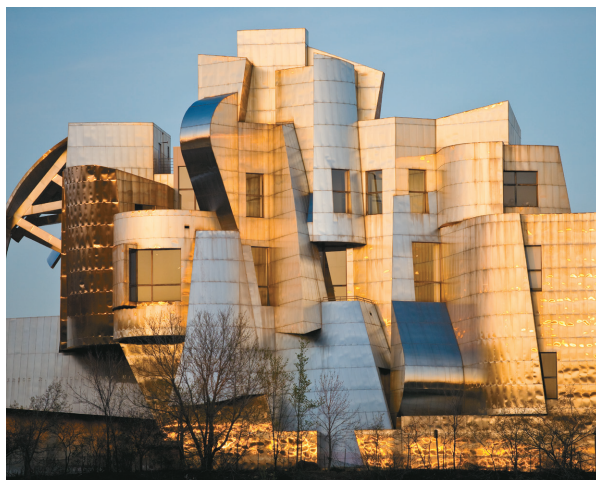
1 Loaf brioche (or other eggy bread), cut into 1 1/2 -inch cubes
3 3/4 cups Cedar Summit cream
1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
6 large eggs, room temperature
2 large egg yolks, room temperature
2 oz 70% Cacao dark chocolate, chopped
1 teaspoon Bolivar Bittercube Bitters (sub in vanilla extract and 1 tsp Meyer lemon zest)
1 1/2 pints fresh blackberries
1 Tablespoon Meyer lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Place the bread cubes on a large baking sheet in a single layer and toast until lightly golden brown on all sides, turning a few times, about 15 minutes. Remove and let cool slightly.

Bring cream and 1 cup of sugar to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Remove from heat and mix in chocolate until just melted. Whisk together the eggs and yolks in a medium bowl. Slowly whisk the warm milk mixture into the eggs and add bitters.

Transfer the bread cubes to a 9 x 15-inch baking dish, pour the custard mixture over and press on the bread to submerge in the custard. Let the mixture sit at room temperature for 30 minutes to allow the bread to absorb more of the custard.

Place the baking dish inside a larger roasting pan and fill the outer pan with warm water halfway up the sides of the baking dish. Bake until puffed around the outside but still slightly jiggle in the center, about 45 minutes. Carefully remove from the water bath and let rest at least 15 minutes before serving. Toss the remaining 1/4 cup sugar with the blackberries and lemon juice. Serve bread pudding topped with macerated berries.



Weisman Museum. Photos by Hubert Bonnet



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I hate it when that happens!

Summer's over, and the vacation you promised yourself in the Lake District (England, Italy, or, hey, Brainerd) failed to materialize, what with time and discretionary dollars in short supply this year.

So, curse your luck and suck your thumb. Or (clearly better), treat yourself to a stay-cation: no frequent flier miles, hotel reservation or language gap to cope with here at home. Instead, dedicate a weekend—or more, if you're lucky—to exploring some less-familiar jewels of our Twin Cities, hiding in plain sight. We'll set out a scavenger hunt based on your particular fascination. Feel free to mix and match.

You're a culture vulture? Then you're probably already on a first-name basis with Vincent and Claude at the (always free) Minneapolis Institute of Art. But how about the snazzy, Gehry-designed Weisman on the University campus? The Museum of Russian Art? Galleries lining 13th NE, St. Paul's Lowertown, and the artists' collective in Northeast's California Building?

Oh, you prefer your arts of the livelier sort, not on the wall, but also not off the budget? Try the Minnesota Orchestra's rush line half an hour before the band strikes up. Take advantage of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra's new policy of \$5 tickets for first-timers (many locations). Or savor top musical talent in performances at MacPhail Center and the U of M's Ferguson Hall (many free).

Be one of the first to invade the new Cowles Center for Dance, with a line-up of over two dozen troupes, or spy on the

student talent at the West Bank's Barbara Barker Center showcasing emerging choreographers.

Sure, the big G offers rush lines for its theater productions, but, chances are, you've been there, done that. This is your chance to experience the fun and funk of dozens (literally) of fringe-y acting troupes, where the material pushes the envelope, and you're within inches of the stage at smaller venues such as Theatre Garage, Gremlin, Pillsbury House and more. Check www.MinnesotaPlaylist.com to see what's on and where. Many a company offers a pay-what-you-can-night to help your pocketbook. More theater discounts at www.Goldstar.com.

History hound? Betcha never toured our fab State Capitol (free). Then head to the nearby Minnesota History Center to fill in the blanks. Just down the road, see how the other half lived in the grand Hill House mansion of a former lumber baron. Across the river back in Minneapolis, trace your ancestors' travails in the new land at the Mill City Museum—or, even earlier, at Fort Snelling.

Oh, you're the outdoors type? Chances are, you've already enjoyed a Twins game at our new ballpark, so time to try some DIY athletics. Rent one of those lime popsicle bikes from one of the new stands scattered around the city and tour the chain of lakes and beyond. Rent a canoe. And new this season, rent a kayak to cruise the Mississippi, or even navigate it via a paddleboard (also new). Those guided tours include history and trivia info declaimed along the way.

Rival Twin Cities Jogging Tours and City Running Tours companies offer themed jogging runs. Also new: foodie tours of our town via Taste Twin Cities Food Tours and also Twin Cities Food Tours (stroll and sample as you go).

Speaking of eats: This is the perfect excuse to venture to our towns' rich stretches of storefront ethnic restaurants. With low, low prices, friendly service and new taste treats, what's to lose? (Okay your waistline.) St. Paul's University Avenue stretch approaching the State Capitol is especially rich in Asian flavors. Northeast's Central Avenue spans the globe from Latin to Moroccan, and Eat Street hosts a true U.N. of culinary treats. Even easier: a stop at Lake Street's Global Market, which delivers on its promise and often hosts free live music, too. A bit more established, Lyn-Lake traces flavors from Greece to Japan, Italy to the Middle East and more. Lots more.

And here's the best plan of all: Choose an unfamiliar neighborhood, park the car, and spend the afternoon exploring what it has to salute, in offering that showcase all of the above. Stroll down St. Paul's Grand Avenue for grand shopping, eating, and listening. Hit 50th & France for everything from a day spa to cooking classes, with an indie movie and chic bars, cafes, and designer shops as a bonus. Sashay along East Hennepin to discover more of the same—spa, glam wear by local designers, offbeat eats.

See, Dorothy was right: There's no place like home. To get started, find addresses and hours by visiting www.MeetMinneapolis.org and www.visitsaintpaul.com. ■

Join LAVENDER Magazine and



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MARRIAGE**



THE BIG GAY RACE

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October 15

9 am - Start time
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www.mnunited.org
651-330-6852

The yellow brick road was just the beginning...

Beyond the Rainbow: Garland at Carnegie Hall

By William Randall Beard
Music arranged by David Lohman

Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Judy Garland's legendary comeback concert!

The incomparable Jody Briskey and the remarkable Norah Long embody the one and only Judy Garland; one actress leads audiences through a lifetime of memories underscored by some of the greatest songs of the 20th century; the other relives those memories starting with Garland's childhood days in Minnesota, on to the studios at MGM, through marriages and divorces, and finally to Carnegie Hall. It's a life packed with love, passion, courage, and resilience, featuring 24 of Garland's greatest hits including "Get Happy," "That's Entertainment," "The Trolley Song," and of course, "Over the Rainbow."

October 8–November 6

MAKE A NIGHT OF IT: Visit www.HistoryTheatre.com for information about special events and fun add-ons before select performances such as **Pizza and a Play** (10/20 and 11/4), **Sip 'n' Sample** (10/28), and **Karaoke** (10/29)!

Single Tickets as low as \$28!

Season Passes starting at just \$120 Details at www.HistoryTheatre.com

LAVENDER NIGHT AT THE THEATER
Thursday, October 13

\$10 off per ticket and a drink discount

7 p.m. light hors d'œuvres / 8 p.m. curtain

Online promotion code: **LAVBTR** or call 651.292.4323
(Not valid with previous purchases or with other discounts.)

history theatre

651.292.4323 • 30 East 10th Street • St. Paul

OUT
ON THE TOWN

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

CALENDAR



La Cage Aux Folles. Photo by Joan Marcus



Minnesota Lynx.
Photo by Sophia Hantzes

21

22

23

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Cavalia: A Magical Encounter Between Human and Horse

Sept 21 – Oct 2 • Tickets \$64.50 – 99.50 plus applicable fees • White Big Top near The Shops at West End, Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 1-866-999-8111 or www.cavalia.net

Jawaahir Dance Company presents "Golden Nights on the Silver Screen"

Sept 22 – Oct 2 • Tickets \$29, with Sept 28 performance pay-as-able • Ritz Theater, 345 13th Ave. NE, Mpls • For more info on event, as well as performance times and tickets, call 612-436-1129 or visit www.ritzdolls.com • www.jawaahir.org

Intermedia Arts presents "Loose Ends: Definitions of the Young Mind"

Sept 22 – Oct 22 Exhibition • Opening Reception Sept 24 at 2 PM • \$3 suggested donation • Gallery Hours: Mon – Fri/10 AM – 6 PM, Sat/12 – 5 PM • Intermedia Arts, 2822 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • For more info, visit www.intermediaarts.org

Intermedia Arts presents "The Catalyst Series – The Joint Project"

Sept 22 – 25 • 8 PM • Tickets \$10 Advance/Student/Senior, \$12/Door • Intermedia Arts, 2822 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 612-871-4444 or visit www.intermediaarts.org

Ramsey Hill House Tour

Sept 22 • 5 – 9 PM • Tickets \$30 in advance, \$40 day of event • Will Call at Germanic American Institute, 301 Summit Ave., St. Paul • www.ramseyhill.org

Festa Italiana

Sept 23 – 24 • Fri/3 – 9 PM, Sat/9 AM – 9 PM • Free and open to public • Harriet Island, St. Paul • For more info, visit www.festaitalianamn.com

The Minneapples Improv

Sept 23 and 30 • 8 PM • Tickets \$10 • Huge Improv Theater, 3037 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • www.hugetheater.com/ Friday

Oktoberfest at the Gasthaus

Sept 23 – 25 • Gasthaus Bavarian

Hunter Restaurant, 8390 Lofton Ave., Stillwater • For more info, call 651-439-7128 or visit www.gasthausbavarianhunter.com

Art on Main

Sept 23 – 24 • Fri/4 – 9 PM, Sat/11 AM – 5 PM • Main Street, Stillwater, MN

Town House Bar presents R&B group Talent & Lyrikal

Sept 23 • Town House Bar, 1415 University Ave. S., St. Paul • For more info, call 651-646-7087 • www.townhouse-bar.com

St. Cloud Pridefest

Sept 23 – 25 • For more info, visit us at www.stcloudpride.org

Bagpipes and Bonfires

Sept 24 • 5:30 – 10:30 PM • Ascension Church, 214 N. 3rd St., Stillwater • For more info, visit www.ae-church.org

33rd Annual Afton Art in the Park

Sept 24 – 25 • Sat/10 AM – 5 PM, Sun/11 AM – 4 PM • Afton, MN • For more info, visit www.aftonartfair.com

Walk for Recovery! 2011

Sept 24 • 9 AM – 1 PM • Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, 2020 W. Lake of the Isles Pkwy., Mpls • For more event details, as well as registration, visit us at www.minnesotarecovery.org

Food, Wine and Cider Festival

Sept 24 • 1 – 6 PM • Tickets: \$30/Adults, \$15/Children under 12, group rates available • Maiden Rock Winery & Cider, Stockholm, WI • For more info, visit www.maidenrockwinery-cider.com • www.stockholmwisconsin.com/events.html

Fall Equinox Festival

Sept 24 • 7 – 9 PM • Tickets \$10 • WideSpot Performing Arts Center, Stockholm, WI • For more info, visit www.widespotperformingarts.org • www.stockholmwisconsin.com/events.html

"F. Scott's 115th Birthday"

Sept 24 • 2 PM • Free & open to public • Central Library Fitzgerald Alcove,

3rd Floor, 90 W. 4th St., St. Paul • For more info, call 651-222-3242 or email friends@thefriends.org • www.thefriends.org

Healing Minnesota With Song, Word and Spirit

Sept 25 • Every fourth Sunday of month (except Dec) through Oct 2012 • Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet, Mpls • For more info, call 612-871-7400 or visit www.plymouth.org

3rd Annual Walk & Roll Event

Sept 25 • 8 – 10:30 AM • Mall of America, Main Rotunda, Bloomington, MN • For more info, visit www.mwsser-vices.org

Unity Christ Church – "Unity, Metaphysics, and the Beatles"

Sept 25 • 9 AM and 11 AM services • Unity Christ Church, 4000 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley, MN • For more info, call 763-521-4793 or visit www.unitychristchurch.org

The Jungle Theatre presents "Jazz Meets the Bard" with Christine Rosholt

Sept 26 • 7:30 PM • Tickets \$25 • The Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • For tickets or more info, call 612-822-7063 or visit www.jungletheater.com

"Il Poverello" Workshop with The Rose Ensemble

Sept 27 • 7 PM • Free & open to public • Merriam Park Branch Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., St. Paul • For more info call 651-222-3242 or email friends@thefriends.org • www.thefriends.org

Intermedia Arts presents "Beyond the Pure Reading Series: Queer Voices"

Sept 27 • 7 PM • \$5 suggested donation • Intermedia Arts, 2822 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • For more info, visit www.intermediaarts.org

Minnesota Orchestra presents "Vanska Opens the Season: Bolero"

Sept 29 – Oct 1 • 7 PM • Tickets \$26 – \$84 • Orchestra Hall, 1111 Nicollet Mall, Mpls • For more info or tickets,

call 612-371-5656 or visit www.minnesotaorchestra.org

Lavender Night at the Theatre: The Pillsbury House Theatre presents "The Pride"

Sept 29 • Pre-Show Reception 6:30 PM, Curtain 7:30 PM • Pillsbury House Theatre, 3501 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls • For tickets, call 612-825-0459 or visit www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org

State Theatre presents Peter Frampton in Concert

Sept 30 • 8 PM • Tickets \$48.50 – 58.50 • State Theatre, 805 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 1-800-982-2787 or visit www.hennepintheatretrust.org

Patrick's Cabaret presents "Thriller!"

Sept 30 – Oct 1 • 8 PM • Tickets \$20 at door, cash or check only • Patrick's Cabaret, 3010 Minnehaha Ave. S., Mpls • For more info, call 612-205-1512 or visit www.patrickscabaret.org

JazzMN presents John Clayton in concert

Oct 1 • 7:30 PM • Advance tickets \$27 – 29, tickets at door \$29 – 31 • Hopkins High School Performing Arts Center, 2400 Lindbergh Dr., Minnetonka • For more info or tickets, call 1-866-811-4111 or visit www.jazzmn.org

Fall Colors Fine Art & Jazz Festival

Oct 1 – 2 • City Lot #9 in the 600 block of North Main St., Stillwater • For more info, visit www.ilovestillwater.com

10th Annual Living With Breast Cancer Conference

Oct 1 • 8 AM – 3:30 PM • Tickets: \$30/ Survivors, \$45/others (\$59 at door), \$20 for students with their ID • Minneapolis Convention Center, Mpls • For more info or tickets, visit www.bcaamn.org

Orpheum and State Theatres Celebrate 90 Years With an Open House

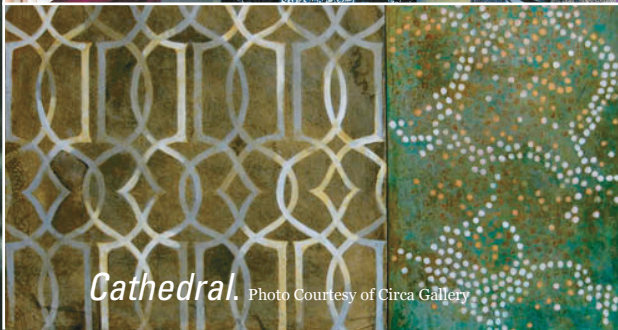
Oct 1 • 4 – 6 PM • Free & open to public • Begins at State Theatre, 805 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • www.hennepintheatretrust.org



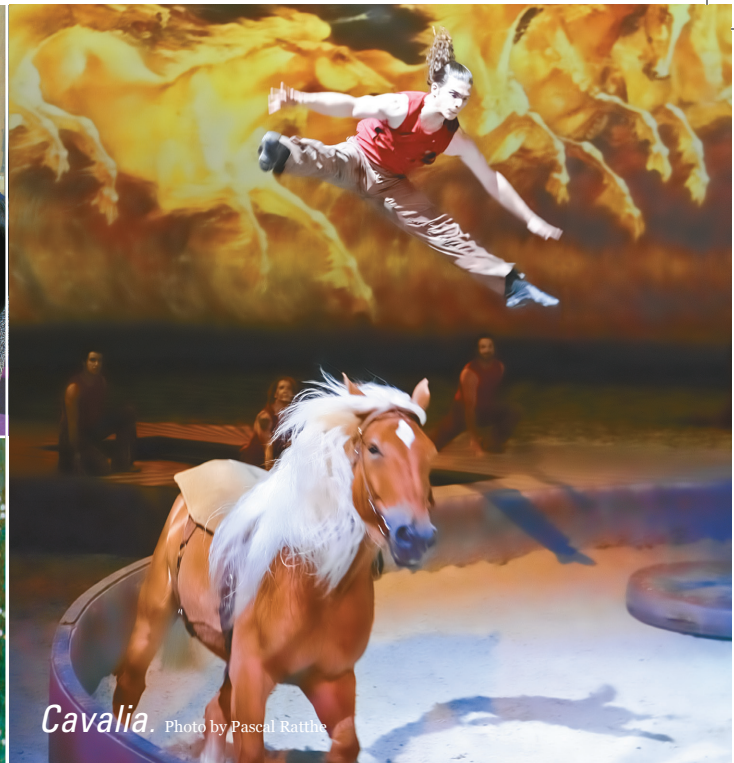
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Mean. Photo by Jacqueline Byers



Cathedral. Photo Courtesy of Circa Gallery



Cavalria. Photo by Pascal Ratthe

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The Great Gay Get Together

Oct 1 • 6:30 – 10 PM • Home of Matt Piermanier, 4th Floor Club Room, 78 E. 10th St., St. Paul, MN • For more info, visit www.outfront.org/greatgaytogether

Bingo A-Go-Go presents "High School Bingo" Featuring Miss Richfield 1981

Oct 1 • Doors open at 6 PM. Games begin at 7 PM • \$35 advance, \$40 door • Hyatt Regency, Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 612-863-7168 or visit www.bingoagogo.com

Piper Jaffray Jazz at Orchestra Hall – Jazz At Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis: A 50th Birthday Celebration!

Oct 2 • 7 PM • Tickets \$35 – \$60, \$85 VIP • Orchestra Hall, 1111 Nicollet Mall, Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 612-371-5656 or visit www.minnesotaorchestra.org

Indian Health Board Silent Auction for United Way

Oct 3 – 7 • Indian Health Board, 1315 24th St. E., Mpls • For more info, call us at 612-721-9800 or visit www.indianhealthboard.com

Pantages presents Trailer Park Boys "Drunk, High and Unemployed Tour"

Oct 4 • 7:30 PM • Tickets \$29 – \$43 • Pantages Theatre, 710 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 1-800-982-2787 or visit www.hennepintheatretrust.org

Minnesota Orchestra Classical Concerts presents "Vanska Conducts: A Hero's Life"

Oct 6 at 11 AM and Oct 8 at 8 PM • Tickets \$22 – \$84 • Orchestra Hall, 1111 Nicollet Mall, Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 612-371-5656 or visit www.minnesotaorchestra.org

Theater Latte Da presents "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"

Oct 6 – 30 • Ordway Center, McKnight Theatre, 345 Washington St., St. Paul • For tickets or more info, including performance times, call 651-224-4222 or visit www.ordway.org

2nd Annual Training to Serve Benefit.

Oct 6 • 6 – 8 PM • \$50 • Minneapolis Women's Club, Mpls • For more info, visit www.trainingtoserve.org

Illusion Theater presents "The K of D: An Urban Legend"

Oct 7 – 22 • Tickets \$15 – \$30 • Illusion Theater, 528 Hennepin Ave., 8th Floor, Mpls • For tickets or more info, call 612-339-4944 or visit www.illusiontheater.org

Patrick's Cabaret presents Singer/Songwriter Series hosted by Drew Peterson

Oct 7 • 8 PM • Admission \$10 at door (cash or check only) • Patrick's Cabaret, 3010 Minnehaha Ave. S., Mpls • For more info, call 612-724-6273 or visit www.patrickscabaret.org

North Star Gay Rodeo Association Dance

Oct 8 • 8 PM – 12:30 AM • \$10 suggested donation at door gets you in and the first beverage of your choice • Ballentine VFW, 2916 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • For more info, visit www.nsgra.org

Beyond the Rainbow – Garland at Carnegie Hall

Oct 8 – Nov 6 • The History Theatre, Mpls • For performance times and tickets, visit www.historytheatre.com

VocalEssence presents "The Gift of Fire"

Oct 9 • 4 PM • Orchestra Hall, 1111 Nicollet Mall, Mpls • www.vocalescence.org

Ongoing

Hennes Art Company presents "Abstract Expressionism – The AB EX Show"

Through Sept 30 • Gallery Hours Mon – Sat/10 AM – 5 PM • Hennes Art Company, 1607 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • For more info, call 612-436-2077 or visit www.hennesart.com

Brave New Workshop presents "Obama Mia: or The Real Housewives of Abbottabad"

Through Oct 1 • Thurs/8 PM/\$26, Fri/8 PM/\$29, Sat/7 PM/\$29, Sat/10 PM/\$27 • The Brave New Workshop Theatre, 2605 Hennepin Ave. S., Mpls • For tickets, call 612-332-6620 or visit www.bravenewworkshop.com

Park Square Theatre presents "August: Osage County"

Through Oct 2 • Tickets \$38 – 58 • Performances Thurs – Sat at 7:30 PM, Sundays at 2 PM • Park Square Theatre, 20 W. 7th Pl., St. Paul • For tickets or more info, call 651-291-7005 or visit www.parksquaretheatre.org

Renaissance Festival

Weekends through Oct 3 • Shakopee, MN • For more info, visit www.renaissancefest.com

Jungle Theater presents "Hamlet"

Through Oct 9 • Tickets \$10 – \$35 • The Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 612-822-7063 or visit www.jungletheater.com

Mixed Blood Theatre presents "Neighbors"

Through Oct 9 • Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 S. 4th St., Mpls • For more info or tickets, call 612-338-6131 or visit www.mixedblood.com

"The Ballad of Sexual Dependency"

Through Oct 16 • Walker Art Center, 1750 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • For more info, call 612-375-7600 or visit www.walkerart.org

Minnesota Museum of American Arts presents "Our Treasures: Highlights From the Minnesota Museum of American Art"

Through Oct 23 (Tweed exhibition), Aug 2011 – July 2012 general • Tweed hours are Tues/9 AM – 8 PM, Wed – Fri/9 AM – 4:30 PM, Sat – Sun/1 – 5 PM • Tweed Museum of Art, Duluth • For more info about exhibition, visit www.d.umn.edu/tma or email Jessari Kuppe at jkuppe@mmaa.org or 651-797-4057 • www.mmaa.org

The Lab Theater presents "Rocky Horror Show – Live"

Through Oct 31 • Tickets \$46.50, VIP for \$55 • The Lab Theater, 700 N. 1st St., Mpls • For more info, including a list of performance times, visit www.thelabtheater.org • www.rockyhorrorminneapolis.com

Nina Bliese Gallery presents Ann Ginsburgh Hofkin – "Contemplating Mysterious Landscapes"

Through Nov 11 • Gallery hours: Tues – Fri/ Noon to 4 PM, or by appointment (call 651-328-7762) • Nina Bliese Gallery, 225 S. 6th St., Ground Floor, Mpls • For more info, call 612-332-2978 or visit www.ninabliesegallery.com

Nina Bliese Gallery presents Elise DeLong – "Veiled Illusions"

Through Nov 11 • Gallery hours: Tues – Fri/ Noon to 4 PM, or by appointment (call 651-328-7762) • Nina Bliese Gallery, 225 S. 6th St., Ground Floor, Mpls • For more info, call 612-332-2978 or visit www.ninabliesegallery.com

Movie Night

Every Monday and Tuesday • 9 PM – Close • The Brass Rail, 422 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • www.thebrassrallounge.com

The Center of Light – Guided Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesdays 10 – 10:30 AM • Thursdays 5 – 5:30 PM • Saturdays 7 – 7:30 AM • Center of Light, 2548 Pleasant Ave., Mpls • For more info, call 612-205-5545 or email Minneapolis@center-soflight.org

The Center of Light presents a Lecture Series

Tuesdays • 7 PM • \$8 per lecture • 2548 Pleasant Ave., Mpls • For more info or to register, call 612-205-5545, visit www.minneapolis.lightlectureseries.com or email Minneapolis@centersoflight.org

Male Revue

Every Wednesday – Sunday • 8 PM – 1:30 AM • The Brass Rail, 422 Hennepin Ave., Mpls • www.thebrassrallounge.com

Pumps and Pearls Drag Revue

Every Thursday • Free in the Main Bar • \$5 Pitchers MGD & Lite • Free pool & darts • Town House Bar, 1415 University Ave., St. Paul • www.townhousebar.com

Thirsty Thursdays

Every Thursday • \$1 Wells & Domestic • Minimal Cover Charge • Gay 90s, 408 S. Hennepin Ave., Mpls • www.gay90s.com

Town House Bar 19+ Nights

Every Thurs – Sat • 9 PM • Town House Bar, 1415 University Ave. S., St. Paul • For more info, call 651-646-7087 • www.townhousebar.com

Bar Bingo

Every Friday • 6 PM • Benefits the Aliveness Project • Town House Bar, 1415 University Ave., St. Paul • www.townhousebar.com

Singles Pool Tournament

Every Third Sunday of the Month • 4 PM • 19 Bar, 19 W. 15th St., Mpls • www.19bar.itgo.com

FOR MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS, VISIT LAVENDERMAGAZINE.COM/CATEGORY/CALENDAR, OR SCAN THE CODE ABOVE WITH YOUR SMART PHONE





A MODISH NIGHT'S DREAM

AS AFTERNOON LIGHT fades, we take note that the sun is aging as we bide our time. At a rustic location outside the city, it seems our stylish friends have lost their way. "So quick bright things come to confusion," I think. The bending, twisting boughs around us are so very *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Eventually, they emerge in formal dress: Justin Jones, Mana Moini, Brandon McCray, Brian Trinh, and Ty Rice. It's an unseasonably hot early fall day and each are impeccably suited for our photo shoot.

Leading the pack is Justin Jones, co-founder of Modish Nights and *Lavender* columnist. Despite the heat, Jones never sports so much as a drop of perspiration nor a hair out of place. In between shots, I had the opportunity to discuss their monthly dinner parties, sprite-sized galas.

"We started in November," Jones explained. "Our first party was in April. It took us that long to get it pulled together. I had originally called it 'Bliss and Dish,' but...we decided on *Modish*. It has 'dish' in

the name and it has the feeling we were going for: posh, exclusive, but our organization is not exclusive—it's just the fantasy."

When Jones moved to the area from North Carolina, he discovered that people in the Twin Cities be insular. Knowing other transplants felt similarly, the seed was planted. They would hold events with only one rule: that you had to sit next to someone you didn't know.

Glamorous venues with lux food and wine are bountiful, the guests are eager to be swept away for a Modish Night. The inaugural event was held at Seven in downtown Minneapolis. The room was accented with lavender touches—a color and style theme is chosen for each evening. The restaurant created a signature cocktail, offering it to guests for only \$5. Naturally, that idea caught on and now each venue crafts a special beverage for the group.

Their motto went to work, "Cocktail as strangers, dine as acquaintances, leave as friends."



**the
PRIDE**
BY Alexi Kaye Campbell



For info: 612-825-0459
www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org

**PILLSBURY HOUSE
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**September 16
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An erotic puzzle
of exhilarating
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The Pride time
warps between two
gay relationships
in 1958 and 2008.

Warning: *The Pride* depicts
adult content and graphic
sexual situations.
For ages 17 and older.

LAVENDER'S
Nights
at the Theater

Thursday, Sept. 29, 7:30 pm

Call 612-825-0459 and ask
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Discount!

Pre-show reception at
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"We have so much fun seeing people connect," explained Jones. "The feedback has been great," adds Ty, grinning. Ty Rice is incapable of not smiling. His positive energy is infectious. While everyone else would strike a pose, affecting chiseled Model Face, there would be Rice, with a wide smile. "You leave knowing names instead of saying, 'Oh, great to see...you.'"

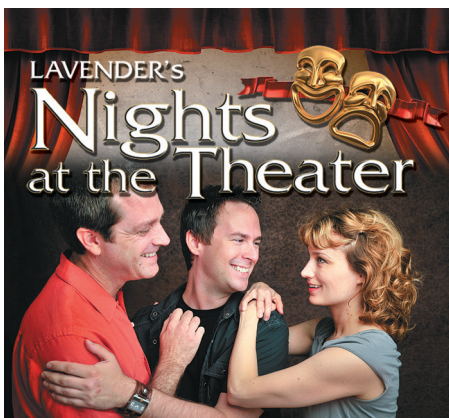
"It's all about getting dressed up, that fantasy you create," adds Mana, the Persian beauty. In this case, it's orchestrated fantasy. Mana's keen eye and smart demeanor gives away the breadth and depth of their versatility. Each of the Modish Nights players has a background in business, marketing, and—formally or informally—how to conceptualize an event that ties together interpersonal relationships in a group setting. Knowing your demographic, getting what will click, shaking, and stirring. Taking a little longer to get ready, knowing that attention is paid to every detail.

"I think people here have the perception we should always be humble and modest," adds Brandon McCray, pausing for a moment. Constantly checking lighting, angles, conferring with the photographer, his media experience was evident and his refined features practically devoured the camera. He lambasted modesty: "Be glamorous! Play!"

Most of the group is media savvy, including Brian Trinh, who also happens to sport another set of impossibly high cheekbones. He is part to blame for Rice's constant grin. Trinh hardly lets a word pass by without an acerbic and hilarious zinger. His ease and charisma makes it easy to see why he would be an ideal candidate to mingle at a party, sharing his sly wit with the kind of one-liners that conjures feelings of being invited to sit at the cool kid's table.

To ward off moments of awkwardness at a Modish Night event, the hosts begin the conversation for the guests. A card is placed at





UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

"The Pride"
September 29

Pillsbury House Theatre
3501 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls

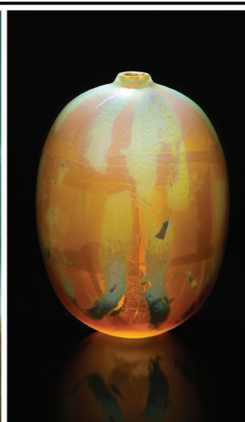
Pre-Show: 6:30 PM • Curtain: 7:30 PM
For tickets, call 612-825-0459 or visit
pillsburyhousetheatre.org

**Beyond the Rainbow:
Garland at Carnegie Hall**

October 13th, 8:00 pm
Reception: 7:00 PM
History Theatre • 30 E. 10th St. • St. Paul, MN
Tickets: (651) 292-4323 • historytheatre.com



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each setting with five questions guests must ask the person next to them. As the evening progresses, questions are asked, until they reach the fifth and final question: "What do you like most about me?"

Jones explains, "The answers can be quite profound, depending on how many cocktails—"

"—or glasses of wine," Trinh interjects,

"—people have had. Some people laugh their heads off and sometimes it can be a really emotional. It's really amazing to see." They smile, slyly.

And just like that, they were done. Floating off to the next new spot, following glittery breadcrumbs back to the relative safety of the city as we're left wondering if all that really happened, or if it was just a brief dream. □

CREDITS:

Produced by: **Andy Lien**

Photography by: **Mike Hnida**

Location: **Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, www.arboretum.umn.edu**

Styled by: **Brandon McCray**

Gown by: **Bloomingdale's, www.bloomingdales.com**

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The Lowry oyster plate.
Photos by Mike Hnida



THE LOWRY

The Lowry Serves Up Neighborhood Noshes for the Upper Crust Crowd.

This is not my first Blue Plate Restaurant Company write-up and, though I feel I'm required as a food writer (according to our secret food writer code) to eschew any restaurant that has any corporate leanings, I just can't. So they're like the Roman Empire of Twin Cities restaurateurs. So what? As the Romans sowed the seeds of imperialism, they brought sanitation, the alphabet, and really sexy centurion uniforms. The Blue Plate Restaurant Company, on the other hand, brings comfort food with a twist. Their 450 or so employees get the restaurant business, and best of all, they know how →

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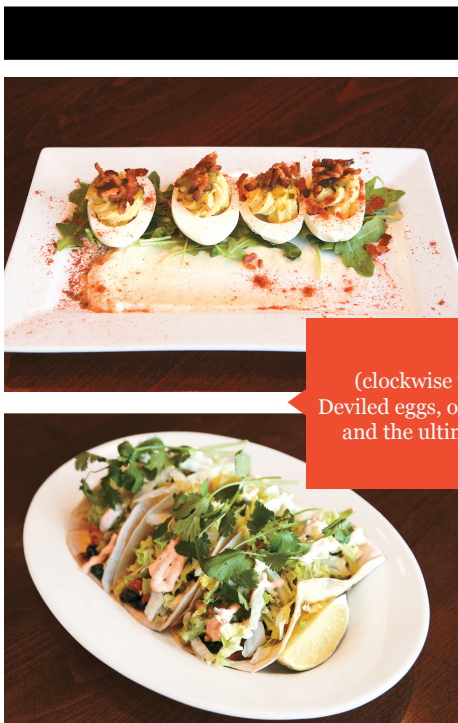
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to turn a satisfied customer into a regular. Like mighty Caesar, they also have enough sense to let each satellite do some self-governing, and assimilate into the culture of its own neighborhood—as in, fishnet-wearin', tattooed servers in Uptown. Hail Caesar.

Their newest venture, The Lowry at 2112 Hennepin in Uptown, has brought together a casual foodie's dream team, with Head Chef Dustin Pallansch (Strip Club) and Executive Chef Joan Ida (Tria, Goodfellows) in the kitchen, and Jeff Rogers (Town Talk Diner) at the bar. They also brought in some guy named Armando to do cocktail training, and the mixed drinks definitely were Armando-fabulous. The frothy Lane Zamprey (\$8), for example, has subtlety and a depth that's hard to find in a cocktail. A lengthy tap beer selection (we sipped the Harriet West Side) is another wise move on Blue Plate's part. Microbrews are the new wine, after all, and one of their servers is already certified as a Level One Cicerone. Bottom line? Take your server's advice when it comes to pairings—you're going to want something fantastic to go with the food.

The Cheese Curds (\$8) are definitely worth the caloric splurge, made with delicate curds from a Wisconsin farm, and served with a jalapeño blueberry ketchup for dipping. The breading is perfect and the sauce is sassy enough to thrill, but doesn't overpower the cheese or overload your

senses. Festive Deviled Eggs (\$2 ea.) are next, trussed up with diced bacon, arugula, and garlic aioli. If you're hung over, however, might I recommend instead the French Fry Poutine (\$9). Yes, the Blue Plate folks do indeed understand the special needs of the Uptown customer, as opposed to, say, the clients who frequent the Highland Grill. Hot, salty French fries are smothered in braised beef, melted cheese curds and rich gravy. If that doesn't cure what ails you, at least it helps you stop obsessing about things that are now out of your control. That's part of the serenity prayer, right? If you're not having a poutine kind of a day, The Lowry also sells oysters, both raw and Rockefeller.

Some restaurants with great apps sometimes struggle with ho-hum entrees. The Lowry's entrees hold their own with the Crepes Pot-au-Feu (\$13) as well as the Pork (\$15) and the Fish Tacos (\$13). If you've never thought to put horseradish with a savory crepe, let this be your re-education. Braised beef, stew vegetables and light-as-air potato croquettes are given rare, but deserved diva treatment when wrapped in this delicate crepe. The pork was a little overdone for my liking, but its accompanying polenta, fried shallots and zesty San Marzano sauce were fantastic, and I do understand most diners are finicky about pork that's anything less than well done.

The Fish Tacos, however, blew us away.

Blackened tilapia, avocado, fresh salsa, Napa cabbage and a twist of lime juice made these the best fish tacos I've had, to the best of my memory, in the Twin Cities. Normally with a fish taco, halfway through, you end up regretting the choice not to go with beef, or at least chicken. These summery beauties, on the other hand, are worth coming back for again and again.

With our entrees, we sipped the Blood and Sand (\$8), which uses orange juice, Cherry Heering and sweet vermouth to tart up its scotch base; and the Battle Cat (\$8), a beer cocktail laced with vodka, Orange Curacao, and lemon juice that is surprisingly refreshing and all too drinkable. The Lowry is working on completing its official whiskey list, but anything from a Macallan to Death's Door white whiskey is yours for the asking. The Death's Door is downright tequila-y, and pops the salt in the crust of our velvety Banana Cheesecake. It may have been an accidental pairing, but happy accidents are my favorite kind.

The Lowry has an outdoor patio and is working on the parking situation. Currently, they offer free valet service after 6:00, but in the future, they may be working out a deal to let their customers park in the lot next door. I hope that deal goes through, because the adjacent giant empty parking lot certainly doesn't give The Lowry the first impression that it's due. □

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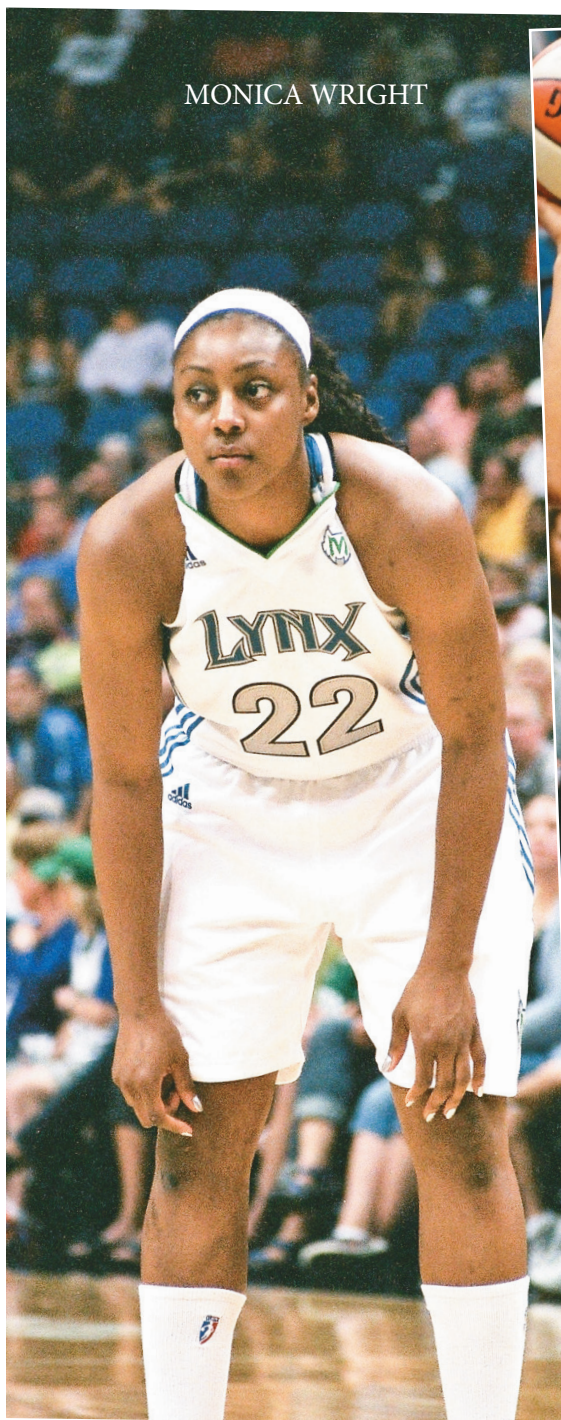
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IT COULDN'T have started out better...“With the first pick of the 2011 WNBA Draft, the MN Lynx select Maya Moore!” Minnesota basketball fans could all appreciate the possibilities and hope for our franchise's future in the humble superstar from UConn. But the Lynx have had talent and number one picks on the team in the past and it has resulted in very little success. Why was this year so different that the team has a best in the league 27-7 record providing home court advantage as far as they can go in the playoffs? Minnesota Gopher Women's Basketball fans know the answer—CHEMISTRY! The same type of chemistry that propelled Lindsey Whalen, Janel

McCarville, and crew to the Final Four in 2004.

Throughout the 2011 season, this team has worked hard, made some bone-headed mistakes, pushed each other to get better, made brilliant plays, pulled off last second wins, and played consistently solid defense. Through it all, they've stayed a cohesive unit that clearly wants to win but does so while having an awful lot of fun. Just look at the pre-game introductions when each starter is faced by Charde Houston (fan-favorite and past All-Star) who chest-bumps, bows down to, or dances with them depending on the player and her mood.



AMBER HARRIS



JESSICA ADAIR



LINDSAY WHALEN



ALEXIS HORNBUCKLE

Part of chemistry on a team has to do with knowing your role and being comfortable in it. The five starters each know their roles well: Lindsay Whalen is the floor general and runs the show quite well. Whalen's 5.85 assists per game (best in the league) plus a career high 13.65 point per game make her the WNBA's *top point guard*. Seimone Augustus is an all-around shooter being able to score from *anywhere* on the floor. She expanded her role this season to be a defensive force often face-guarding the opponent's best shooter which took many teams by surprise. Rebekkah Brunson pulls down rebound after rebound even when the bodies around her are bigger, younger, and faster. She doesn't care...she has the desire and pride to get the ball away from anyone. Taj McWilliams-Franklin (Mama Taj) has the experience and the discipline to impact every aspect of the game and to keep her teammates' emotions and heads where they need to be. Moore does just what we hoped this talented rookie would do—play all-out on every play and keep listening to her coach and teammates for what to improve. Her enthusiasm and enjoyment of the game have helped her team and have engaged the crowd like no other player can.

Those five alone are a dream team but then add on the talented bench: Candice Wiggins is often the first off the bench exploding into a game with aggressive defense and deadly accurate threes to quickly change the tempo of any game. She's also a ham-liking to sing, dance at center court, and be a positive spokesperson for the

team as a whole. Jess Adair made a decision in the off season to get herself into professional playing shape—which translates into losing pounds, keeping them off, and conditioning her tall 6-4 frame to play a full season effectively. Adair has steadily gotten better in each game and has been peaking now at the right time with ten rebounds in a recent game. Amber Harris, another forward at 6-5, was often subbed in with Adair and they combined in the paint very effectively until a concussion has Harris out for the rest of the season. Monica Wright comes into a game at the moment Coach Reeve decides a starter is having an off-night and probably won't recover. The opponent thinks they have shut down Lynx scoring only to face Wright who makes use of her scarce minutes per game to pull down some serious points. If Wright regularly played full games with her average points per minute, she'd be up there as a top scorer, rivaling Augustus. But the key is to know your role and she does—scoring when needed and supporting the team when not. Although not many minutes are logged on the court by guard Alexis Hornbuckle, hours of practice time helping her team prepare are part of her role this year. Fans have anointed Charde Houston the official cheer and dance squad leader of the team. A very talented former All-Star player, she is having a tough year with few minutes on the court. But watch the bench, the huddle, the important team moments and you immediately see Houston's value. She loves this team, the players, and the fans. She has heart and shows it. Chemistry.



SEIMONE AUGUSTUS



REBEKKAH BRUNSON



TAJ MCWILLIAMS-FRANKLIN



CHARDE HOUSTON

MINNESOTA LYNX

So what might happen in the playoffs? This article will be printed after the results of the first and possibly second rounds occur but Lynx fans can proudly make a guess at this point. The team and Coach Reeve have put themselves in the best place that any team in the league can be in. The Lynx hold the best road record at 13-4 so facing opponents in a hostile court is something they are prepared for. Only two teams have better home court records: Seattle and Con-

necticut have each lost only twice at home. The Lynx have lost three times. Since home court advantage was secured early on, Coach Reeve was able to give Lynx starters a rest in the last three games and keep the overall momentum going with three straight wins. Our team has stayed healthy all season. So, this fan's heart and head say the Lynx will make it to the Finals...and then we can just hope the refs will let them all just play! ■



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UK Lifts Lifetime Gay Blood Ban

The BBC reports that England, Scotland, and Wales will lift their lifetime ban on gay men donating blood. Men will now be able to donate blood as long as they've not had sex with another man in the last 12 months. The ban was put in place during the 1980s in an attempt to prevent HIV transmission. The UK's Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs has been reviewing the policy and found that advances in blood testing technology have rendered the lifetime ban unnecessary.

9th Circuit Blocks Arizona Law Limiting Same-Sex Partner Benefits

The Wall Street Journal reports that the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in September that an Arizona law passed in 2009, which eliminated health-insurance coverage for the same-sex partners of public employees, violates the U.S. Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. The Court upheld a lower court's injunction to keep the law from taking effect and said that, while the state wasn't required to provide the benefits, it cannot deny the benefits to a specific group of employees.



Third Gay Utahn Attacked in Two Weeks

The Salt Lake Tribune reports that the third gay man in less than two weeks has been

brutally attacked in Utah. 32-year old Cameron Nelson was attacked and beaten by a group of people yelling anti-gay slurs one morning in September as he was emptying the trash in the alley of his workplace. Nelson suffered minor injuries and a broken nose. On August 26th, 20-year old Dane Hall was attacked by four men as he left a nightclub. The men repeatedly punched Hall and stomped on his head. He suffered a shattered cheekbone and lost six teeth. The third assault took place when a group of men broke into a gay man's apartment and beat up his boyfriend.

Effort to Repeal Colorado's Gay Marriage Ban Dropped

The Associated Press reports that an attempt to repeal Colorado's same-sex marriage ban has been stopped by the college students who organized the effort. Mark Olmstead, who was behind the idea, said he would give up the attempt to collect the 86,000 signatures necessary to put the repeal on the 2012 ballot. Apparently, the repeal didn't have the support of the state's gay rights groups.



Harassment of Black Gay and Bisexual Men Tied to Anxiety

Health Day News reports that a new study from the University of Michigan shows that discrimination, harassment, and shame experienced by black gay and bisexual men contribute to depression and anxiety. 95% of the participants reported that they have been discriminated against or harassed because of their sexual orientation within the last year. The study was published in the latest issue of the journal Depression Research and Treatment.

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→ KANYE WEST AND JAY-Z *WATCH THE THRONE*

Oh, the egos have definitely landed. The two biggest names in hip-hop – certainly in their own minds – collaborate on a mostly successful set of tunes that feature the strengths and weaknesses of both artists. Musically, the material often plays to West's more adventurous side, with pulsing electronic rhythms merging with driving hip-hop beats. Even the occasional use of auto-tune is to artistic effect rather than a need to disguise flat singing. Considering the two's standing in hip-hop, there's a lot of bravado in these lyrics, and more than a few WTF? moments (a real West hallmark) to keep listeners constantly on their toes. No matter, highlights like advance single "H.A.M." album opener "No Church in the Wild" or "Lift Off" (with Beyonce) make it worth the effort.



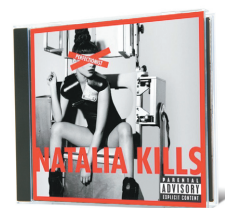
↓ BARBRA STREISAND *WHAT MATTERS MOST*

Streisand taps into the lyrics of good friends Alan and Marilyn Bergman for a double-disc collection, with the first drawing the most attention as it features 10 tracks she had not previously recorded. (Not to worry, "The Way We Were" fans, it's on disc 2 of the deluxe edition). So, what do we learn from these 10 newly recorded songs? First off, even as she nears her 70th birthday, Streisand can still bring it vocally, with her natural power shining like a beacon throughout the set. The arrangements don't get in the way of the vocals, taking a definite back seat, again, to what brought listeners to the party. Beyond that, it's really a matter of the listener's own interest in Bergman's material that will bring them to the table.



↓ MASON JENNINGS *MINNESOTA*

Not surprisingly, Jennings opens up on his latest album, a largely solo effort that cuts across an amazing number of musical styles on its brief, nine-track run. Jennings has always been an open book about his emotions through his 15-year career, and this is no different, from the painful cry of "come home" on album opener "Bitter Heart" or the sense of the loss joy of youth on "Clutch." The whole album has an instant vibe, as it is just Jennings sitting in some smoky bar with a slightly out-of-tune piano and a few friends tossing in accompaniment when needed. All of that merges beautifully on "Well of Love," which features the playing of The Living Room, a musical conglomerate that provides a perfect homemade vibe for the song.



↓ NATALIA KILLS *PERFECTIONIST*

The young British filmmaker (birth name, Natalia Keery-Fisher) and singer sticks close to modern pop music on her debut disc, sounding more like Katy Perry, but (thankfully) bringing a bit of Lily Allen sass along for the ride. So, you probably know the drill—steady, driving electronic beats, heavily processed vocals, a guest vocalist or two (here, the Hologram himself, will.i.am) and a bright, shiny sound. The chipper sound grows stale pretty soon, though at least there is a bit of bite to the lyrics (see the I-don't-want-to-marry "Kill My Boyfriend" for an example). Considering artists like Adele and Florence and the Machine are bringing a fresh British sound, it may be a case of coming to the party too late here for Natalia Kills.

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Snow White

"HELLO MISTER, will you take me home?"

The smell of grease is thick in the air. A few friends and I are at a crisis nursery, making breakfast for kids who may not otherwise have one. We're cooking turkey sausage, eggs, and fruit salad. The young girl posing the question, as tall as my knee, earlier told me her name was Snow White. She's thin for her age. She's looks at me with chilling despair. I hug her. I want nothing more than to rescue Snow White from her impoverished home life, but it's not my place.

Here, I volunteer my time to cook and clean. I'm no psychologist, and I cannot promise Snow White that things will be better at home. That night, I'm trying to dance downtown, under a flood of house music. The hypnotic beats usually fill me. Not tonight. I head outside to the smokers. They're always my retreat when I'm uncomfortable somewhere else. I can't stand the smell or taste of cigarettes, but it always seems that smokers are more easy-going than their nonsmoking counterparts. More philosophical, perhaps.

"Want one?" a stranger offers me a Marlboro. His hair is greasy,

his voice, masculine.

"No thanks."

"What's wrong?"

Conversations around us: someone's gonna get some tonight, someone else's car is broken down in Mankato, but it didn't stop him from coming to the bar. Our conversation: Snow White. It made me feel oddly...grown-up...in a way.

"Look," he says and lights another cigarette. He's tall. I like him. "You're feeling like a piece of shit for coming to the bar right now. But she's just the tip of the iceberg. You seem to be doing your part. So buck up, tell her story, and celebrate what you're thankful for."

His response doesn't help me. It sounds immature. As I wash my face after a distracted night out, I wonder about my darling Snow White. I think about what my smoker said. He's right: It isn't my burden to save the world, but, as a writer, it is my burden to help share it. A fun, fulfilling activity, volunteering helps save lives; it puts smiles on people's faces; it gives others hope. And it's one of the classiest things you can do. ■

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BINGO A GO GO 2011-12: THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP

BINGO A Go Go's 2011-2012 debut, High School Bingo, also marks the partnership of Park House and the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus. Together they will continue the tradition of Bingo A Go Go's money-raising efforts for the many worthy causes sponsored by these two organizations. Park House, explained Shannon Regan, Volunteer/Special Events Director and remaining reigning "Bingo Babe," is a structured day health/mental health treatment program that provides nursing care, psychosocial therapies, nutrition and collaborative treatments with physicians, mental health professionals, and case managers. We exist to enhance the quality of life, maximize human dignity—and promote the health, wellness, and independence of persons living with HIV/AIDS."

Regan sees a bright future for the popular galas, but envisions no radical changes; "At the last game we had around 900 people. I believe we have been doing something right for the last 9 years and I don't want to jinx it. The big change, of course, is that I won't have the other Bingo Babe (Lee Haugee, for-

merly of Clare House, who recently stepped down) with me, instead, I'll have 145 men... but who's counting?"

It's time to unpack your pom-poms and letter sweaters for the costume contest, with prizes, treats, and live entertainment featuring the durable Miss Richfield 1981, Barbie Q, and Gosh Alice Jones. Regan noted that the next—and as yet unnamed—Bingo will be next Spring.

Speaking for TCGMC, Jeff Heine, Executive Director, commented, "Park House has been a long-time friend of the Chorus. They've been very gracious in allowing us to have all-day rehearsals and board meetings at their facility, and we have always reciprocate by performing at their holiday functions and other events.

"Our mission," continues Heine, "is 'gay men building community through music,' and I cannot think of a better way to build community than through this partnership with Park House. We'll be bringing our own enthusiastic and supportive audience and a strong group of volunteers to the event...and

maybe even a little GLEE. You'll just have to show up to find out!"

Said Regan, "The Chorus provides truly remarkable outreach for the GLBT community. "By providing concerts everywhere from the rural areas of Minnesota to the deep south of the United States, the chorus has opened their arms in support for individuals facing the daily trials and tribulations of living in intolerant environments."

"Their work is pivotal in exposing people to an alternate way of thinking than they might otherwise ascertain," she continued, letting youngsters and others know that "things will get better; that there is hope for universal acceptance in this world."

This season marks Dr. Stan Hill's final season as Artistic Director of the Chorus, Heine reminded, hoping "to see all of you at Bingo A Go Go and at our concerts for our 31st season—any chance to see Stan one final time is one you don't want to miss. We are both excited to be a part of Bingo A Go Go with Park House and being able to support the community through this new venture." ■



Photos by Sophia Hantzes



At the Great Lakes Leather Alliance weekend

A Picture is Worth...

WOW, HAVE I taken a lot of photographs over the years! I never realized how many until I was asked to give a leather history presentation and started going through all my photos.

The presentation was part of the recent Great Lakes Leather Alliance (GLLA) weekend in Indianapolis, Indiana. A leather weekend in the heart of conservative Indiana? Yes, and in its tenth year, too. GLLA brought together members of the gay, lesbian, and pansexual leather/BDSM/fetish community primarily—but not exclusively—from the Great Lakes region. It was a jam-packed weekend with four concurrent leather contests and over 40 educational seminars. The seminar I presented was called “I Was There: A Photo-

journalistic Review of Leather History.”

To put that presentation together, I went through all the photos I've taken or collected since getting into leather in 1993. The cliché with photos is that most people have them crammed in a shoebox. My photo library fills three large boxes, the equivalent of 12 shoeboxes each. And those are just the ones taken using a film camera. (Remember film?) The more recent photos were taken digitally and occupy space only on my computer's hard drive. But still, film and digital, there were lots of photos to go through, and lots of happy memories came back to me as I went through the photos. For the presentation I used about 350 photos that best told the story of the last eighteen years of

the leather community as I saw and photographed them. The presentation included photos of club events, contests and titleholders, evenings at leather bars and bar events, and Leather Pride celebrations and parades through the years.

Some of these photos have been exhibited at the Leather Pride booth at the Twin Cities Pride festival or at other Minnesota Leather Pride events. Some of them will be included in a book I'm planning to publish. But right now, you can visit Lavender's website (www.lavendermagazine.com) and see a selection of photos from the presentation.

So, what's a picture worth? A thousand words, and a ton of memories. ▣

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Marcus, Is That You?

I LOVE getting reader feedback. The only thing I love more than getting reader feedback is CRAZY reader feedback. Which is why I jumped for joy upon receiving the following voicemail after my recent column, asking people not to call Michele Bachmann an evil bitch. Here's the message (with my responses interjected throughout):

Hi. Message is for Bradley. Bradley, I just read your column on Michele Bachmann. You do know that Wikiquotes, just like Wikipedia, can be edited; entered by anybody, whether the quote is actually factual, skewed, part factual, part incorrect. You do know that and you made no disclaimer at all on your column that that is part of what Wikiquotes is all about.

Yes, I do know that. I do. And each of the quotes I included is cited and attributed. In many cases, a simple Google search will provide you with the actual audio or video of her saying the things you're concerned about.

As a very happy 30-something gay male, uh, I love Michele Bachmann.

First, I'll assume from your early-50s-sounding voice that you had a cold. Second, look. I've wrapped my head around Jews for Jesus and I can theoretically accept the existence of gay Republicans, but gay Michele Bachmann lovers? Marcus, is that you?

The hate from the Left against her...it's not based on anything factual. It's all based on intangible, subjective items.

Yeah, like that whole "intangible, subjective" same-sex marriage constitutional amendment Michele and Liz Holberg tried

to ram through the Minnesota state legislature in 2003. And again in 2005.

If someone would've told gay people back in the 70s that we want you to get married, they would've been ostracized. Rocks would've been thrown at them. They would've been laughed at.

Wait. You do realize if anyone was throwing rocks and laughing at gay people in the 70s, it probably was Michele Bachmann, right?

Um, it's just unfortunate that you cannot present the facts the way they are and you haven't.

Haven't I? Which ones? My article asked people to stop calling Michele Bachmann an evil bitch. Are you saying people should call Michele Bachmann an evil bitch? I'm confused. Er.

And I could shoot you down in an editorial, week after week after week, but I have better things to do with my time.

Shoot away. If your writing is anything like your voicemail, I welcome the effort.

Um, I don't know why you're so afraid of Michele Bachmann. If she's such a nonthreat, why is Lavender filled with so much hate for her.

Wait, when did I say I was afraid of her? I am on the record telling people not to fear her. When people react to her out of fear, they miss a huge opportunity to criticize her actual record and stated positions.

Maybe I'll call you back in the future.

You did. The very next day.

Hi, Bradley. Message is for you. This is your conservative gay friend who likes Michele

Bachmann.

Wait, "Likes?!" Yesterday, you said you LOVED her. Did you have a falling out?

I found an interesting statistic today in a UPI article. It said that U.S. Muslims are less liberal than the general public on societal acceptance of homosexuality. Forty-five percent say it should be discouraged by society. Discouraged.

What's your point? A recent Pew Research poll also showed that 63% of U.S. evangelical Christians believe homosexuality should be discouraged by society. And I still don't understand what any of this Muslim business has to do with asking people not to call Michele Bachmann an evil bitch.

Uh, it'd be nice if you put some balls behind your words and, let me guess that you won't publish this because what's Michele Bachmann gonna do to you? What are Catholics or Christians gonna do to you? Pray for you. If you publish anything anti-Muslim, you might lose your head or your dick.

I'm not going anywhere near your balls comment. For the record, I've never come across a story about a U.S. Muslim cutting the head or dick off a gay person.

I really hope you'll consider writing a little less hatred and a little more proactive approach.

I really hope you'll consider making more sense in your next voicemail. Or at the very least fess up to this whole thing being nothing more than a late-night, booze-induced prank call. □



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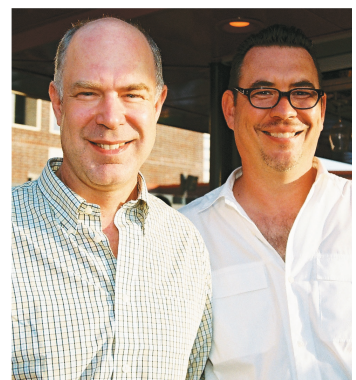
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Gay Softball World Series week in Chicago, the last week of August, ended on a high note for the Minneapolis Titans team, who came in 4th in a field of 52 among the D-League teams. According to Titans pitcher Gary Bingner, a total of five Minnesota teams were in the competition, but the Titans were the only ones to bring home a trophy. A reminder: The Gay Softball World Series will be held here in Minneapolis in 2012.



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Tara Birtwhistle in *Wonderland*. Photo © David Cooper.

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While about 50% of Burns' practice consists of representing individuals, small businesses and nonprofits as an attorney, the other half of his businesses is Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR), serving as either a mediator or an arbitrator. Resolving disputes by mediation or arbitration may not always be possible, but in addition to giving both parties more control over how their dispute is resolved, it is often much more efficient and less costly. "I try to resolve disputes at the lowest level for my clients," Burns begins. "If we don't have to go to court, I won't. I'm cost-effective in my law practice and in my mediation practice, and I'm mindful of the costs and the toll it takes on people to be involved in disputes."

Burns is one of three mediators in the state to be certified by the International Mediation Institute, he's a member of the American Arbitration Association Panel of commercial arbitrators, and he currently serves as a mediator with the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights for the Hennepin County Courts.

"I'm open to talking with people about their situation; I'm not really limited in what I'll consider doing," he concludes. To speak with Burns about legal representation or ADR, contact his office at 612-875-1022. His office is located in downtown Minneapolis, at 150 S. 5th Street, Suite 2300. □

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Ms. Behavior 499

September 11, 2011

Dear Ms. Behavior: I am 24 and in a serious relationship with Myra, a 48-year-old traditionalist with 20th Century feminist views. I've tried to explain that I am a post-feminist lesbian living in the 21st Century, but she stares at me blankly. When we go out for the evening and I'm fully expressing my inner-man—dressed like a boy, packing a dildo, and basically passing—she freaks. When I feel and express my inner-woman, she is much more comfortable, but really that is only half the picture. Myra wants to know why I can't just be regular and I tell her I am. Regular for my age group of queers who don't feel hemmed in by gender oppressive conformity, like our older counterparts were. I am both male and female, and I have no problem outwardly expressing that binary. I don't care what the gender oppressive world thinks. Clearly, though, Myra does care. Very much. I've been thinking of taking testosterone and growing some hair on my face, but haven't figured out how to tell Myra. It's what I really want to do, and I know she'll be upset, possibly to the point of ending it with me. How can I break the news, without breaking the relationship? -Molly/Mark

Dear Molly/Mark:

Some women toyed with gender long before the word “lesbian” was popularized. A few decades ago, when butches purchased dark suits from the men's department and smoked cigars, some carefully avoided revealing their female anatomy, even during sex. Consciousness Raising in the 70s eradicated roles modeled on heterosexual relationships and caused the ritual destruc-

tion of thousands of perfectly good sex toys. Hairiness first popularized by feminism and originally confined to underarms and legs still frightened conservative heterosexuals who'd never flown to Europe.

Until the last decade or so, female hormone-popping was limited to women with medical issues and female-to-male transsexuals. Now, garden-variety dykes cultivate goatees like gardens, without necessarily wanting to become men.

You and Myra are working out a primitive conflict. Myra could have found a like-minded partner by combing the Sapphic personals: “Serious bespectacled womyn seeks womyn for gluten-free muffins, native pronunciation of words like “Nicaragua,” and inoffensive clitoral stimulation once each solstice.”

And if you'd resolved your inner conflict about autonomy, perhaps you'd have chosen a partner with long sideburns packing an even longer silicone dick (or at least one who appreciates yours). Ideally, she'd prefer ritual body piercing to open-mike poetry fundraisers. But perhaps you wouldn't have been attracted to her.

Mature love means supporting someone in becoming herself, rather than hoping she'll become more like you. But no one can guarantee that you and Myra have that kind of love, or that Myra won't dump you for your differences. There is really no best way to spin this for Myra. You can't control her reaction to your plan, and as you know, not all dykes dig whiskers

Don't be alarmed if Myra reacts to your hormonal news by recommitting to her food co-op, dusting off her old Alex Dobkin records —the best line from “Lavender

Jane Loves Womyn” is “There's no PENIS between us friends”— and auctioning hand-made ponchos to raise money for plastic speculums, ensuring that no woman is ever denied the privilege of viewing her cervix (or tossing her salad).

Dear Ms. Behavior:

I'm sharing a beach house for the summer. The problem is that my housemate Jim, a casual friend, uses my personal items and eats my food, and then denies it.

I didn't mind when it was just my peanut butter, but yesterday Jim ate the steak I bought for my dinner date. When I asked Jim, he said it wasn't him, but he had steak in his teeth.

I've found Jim's blondish hair in my comb and his body hair in my razor. He denies using them. But when I saw him naked yesterday, his balls were newly shaven. (He has a beard and doesn't own a razor.)

I feel violated by Jim's intrusive behavior. What can I do?

--EVAN

Dear Evan:

Install a knob on your bedroom door that you can lock with a key from the outside. Buy a small refrigerator for your bedroom, to keep your special date food safe. Everyone knows it's tragic to have an unexpected filet mignon or caviar emergency when you're preparing for a gentleman caller.

Keep your personal hygiene items locked up, including those that Jim has not yet used. If your razor is unavailable, he may develop a penchant for your toenail clippers or your nose spray. Also, stop looking at Jim's balls. □

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Our First Date

HOLYSHIT. HOLYSHIT. Holyshit.

Here I am. In my car. Thirty minutes remaining. THIRTY!

I had to work late. It's 6:00. I have to make it from Golden Valley to Uptown, shower, shave, style my hair, and take the dog out- all in 30 minutes. In rush hour traffic. And, shit, I have to pick up my damn dry cleaning.

Why did I say 6:30? Who the hell schedules a date at 6:30 on a Monday? A dumbass, that's who. Yours truly.

Pause. Breathe, Justin. Breathe.

OK, boy, you got this. Breathe and chill the hell out. He'll understand if you push it back, right? No. I've already cancelled on him twice. He probably already thinks I'm an asshole. He sure has every reason to. When have I ever sucked up my ego TWICE in a row after a guy's cancelled on me? NEVER. That's when.

Then again, he still wants to go on this date, right? So maybe he won't mind if I push it back.

"heyy mister," I'm texting, "pls dont hate me but im JUST getting off work. can we pls push dinner back till 8? promise im worth waiting for:)"

Pause. Hmm. No. I'm not sending it. I sound desperate. Right?

Re-draft text four times. Still not happy. You know what? Screw it. Let's just make this happen. Dry cleaning can wait another day, right?

It's only been ready to pick up for a week.

No text. Especially after two cancelled dates. I owe it to this guy to be there when I promised I would.

He's so cute, this guy. I've been begging for someone like him to come along for three years. Since...the first cut. Since...him. Ugh. No time to think about that now. Focus!

Think positive. Think about how great this date is going to be. I'm going to make it there on time. I'm going to apologize for how I look and say that I was... um... mauled by a pterodactyl. Yes. I was walking to my car and a giant dinosaur flew out of the sky, messed up my hair, and put stubble on my chin. No. I HAVE to shower. I have to look good for this guy. I want to impress him. I want him to want me.

Think positive. Envision the date going well. Envision it going perfectly. Envision... him kissing me on the cheek when he sees me and complimenting me on how cute I look. Think of him laughing at all my stupid jokes and being impressed with my affinity to sappy music (Kenny G or Josh Groban, anyone?). Pretend he'll whisper sweet nothings in my ear afterward, kiss me good night, and ask to see me again.

Ah. Now that feels good. It feels romantic, tranquil, perfect. I already see us marrying. Maybe we'll have kids. I don't really like kids, but for him? Well, yes, of course. Because he's exactly the man I'm building up

in my mind. He has to be. It's not like I ever hype someone up in my brain only to disappoint myself when I realize he's a normal human being and not Superman (hint for those playing at home: yes, that's sarcasm).

I'm like a little girl. A little girl sitting in a corner playing with her imagination, waiting for a Disney Prince to whisk her away. A little girl who doesn't know how to strip away hope from expectation. When you expect everything, you'll always be disappointed. Remember what Mama said: hope for the best and expect the worst. Have I got it backward?

He might not like me anyway. I am, after all (among other things), selfish, impatient, and trite. Not to mention superficial and vain. Nah, he probably wouldn't like me. Maybe I should just cancel instead of going through all this stress.

No. Wait a minute. He invited me. And I can be pretty funny sometimes, right? I'm awful sweet, I know how to make Sloppy Joes, and I can cuddle real good. Maybe he will like me.

I got this. Fifteen minutes left? Easy. We are gonna make this work. Hallelujah, yes we will!

But first things first. I need to crank my car. ☐

Keep in touch! Facebook.com/JustinJonesWriter

4 INCREDIBLE EVENTS 1 HUGE THANK YOU!

AS LAVENDER'S 7TH ANNUAL SUMMER OF PRIDE COMES TO A CLOSE, WE'D LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO MADE THIS YEAR'S EVENTS A GREAT SUCCESS - OUR READERS, THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE KICKOFF PARTY, BITCH 'N BRUNCH, OUT IN THE STANDS AND OUT AT THE MOVIES, AND OUR WONDERFUL SPONSORS.

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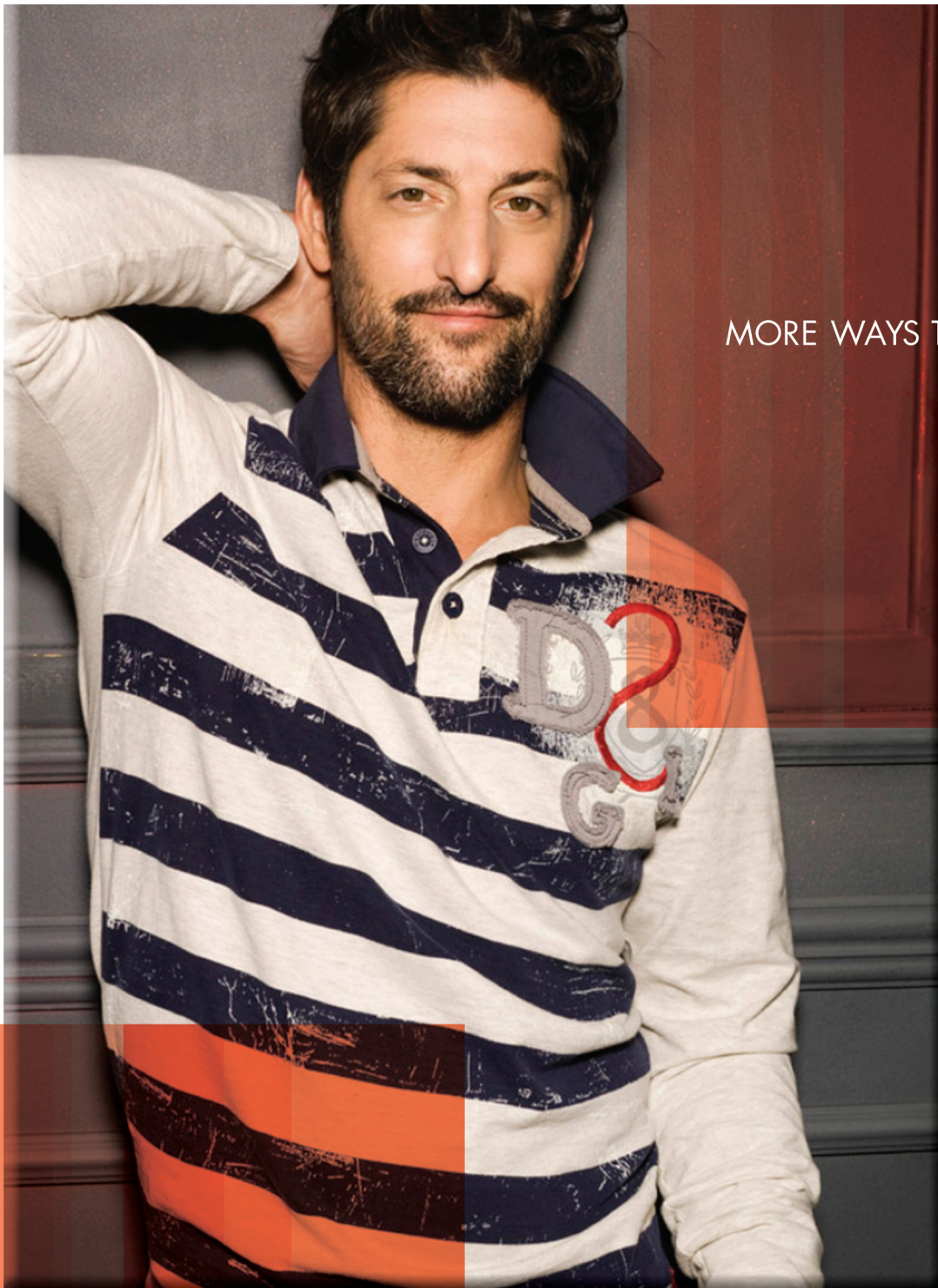
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